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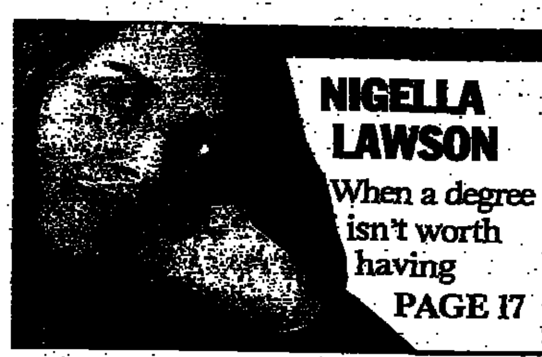

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Nurse's killers 'should be beheaded'

Briton pleads innocence as victim's brother says No to clemency

By Roger Maynard, Shirley English and Stephen Farrell

THE brother of an Australian nurse murdered in Saudi Arabia called yesterday for two British nurses charged with the crime to be publicly beheaded if found guilty.

Yvonne Gilford's brother, Frank, said: "Whoever did this did not give clemency to my sister and I don't think I would offer clemency, bearing in mind the way my sister was murdered."

His uncompromising call came as one of the Britons, Lucille McLauchlan, 31, protested her innocence through her family after speaking to them by telephone from prison in Dhahran.

Miss McLauchlan, from Dundee, is being held with Deborah Parry, 41, after their arrest on Friday last week. Both worked at the King Fahd Military Medical Complex in Dhahran, where Miss Gilford, 55, a senior theatre nurse, was found dead in her room on December 11. She is reported to have been stabbed four times, hit with a hammer and smothered.

Miss McLauchlan's family said she had told them they were being well treated and had been able to collect their belongings. She claimed, however, that Miss Parry had signed a confession after being told she could not speak to her family unless she did so.

Miss McLauchlan's father, Stanley, said yesterday that the family was in shock after learning of her arrest in a telephone call from the Foreign Office on Saturday. He has spoken with his daughter twice, in a conversation arranged through the Saudi authorities on Sunday and during a jail visit by Lawson Ross, the British consul, on Christmas Eve.

Standing beside his wife, Ann, he said: "We were totally stunned and obviously the family is still very shocked. Anyone who knows Lucy will know that she is incapable of the charges that have been made against her. Our first priority now is to ensure that she has the best possible legal representation in Saudi."

Although the two Britons would be expected to engage the services of a lawyer, under Islamic law such a representative would not have the right to take a formal part in any trial.

Miss Laughlan's brother, John, said: "She said the case had nothing to do with her and all she wanted to do was tell us she was OK and not to worry."

Miss Gilford, described as "one of the last of the Florence Nightingales", moved to Saudi Arabia after 25 years in South Africa because she believed it was safer. Her family is still waiting for her body to be returned for burial. The Australian Department of Foreign Affairs is also awaiting the reports from the post-mortem examination about the nature of Miss Gilford's injuries.

Under Saudi Arabia's Islamic law, murderers face execution, although no European has been given the death penalty. Clemency is in the hands of the victim's family, who can appeal to the sentencing court for mercy.

Mr Gilford, speaking at home in Jamestown, South Australia, made it clear, however, that he would make no such appeal. He claimed there was strong evidence against the two Britons: "I believe there is a security video of the girls using Yvonne's credit cards and to me that's pretty conclusive evidence, as they must have got the cards before her room was sealed off.

"If you do something wrong in a foreign country you have to abide by the rules and punishments of that nation," he said.

Dark secrets, page 3

Calls for moral renewal after year of tragedy

By Ruth Gledhill, religion correspondent, and Jill Sherman

THE Archbishop of York, Dr David Hope, gave a warning yesterday of the dangers of turning to "feel-good" spiritualities such as astrology and Tarot cards after a year haunted by Dunblane and the murder of Philip Lawrence.

The Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr George Carey, also referred to the tragedies, saying that society had come adrift from its moral and historical roots. He urged people to face up to their spiritual as well as material needs.

And the Queen, in her Christmas message, emphasised the need to look forward with faith. In an implicit reference to the Dunblane shooting, in which 16 children and their teacher died, she said: "At times of tragedy it is tempting to look back and say 'if only'. But to look back in that way is to look down a blind alley. Better look forward and say 'if only'.

"If only we can live up to the example of the child who was born at Christmas with a love that came to embrace the whole world. If only we can let Him recapture for us that time when we faced the future with childhood's unbounded faith."

Preaching at York Minster, Dr Hope said that in this age of spiritual hunger there was a *dearth of* concrete *values for* people to hold on to. It could be seen in "the market place of contemporary spiritualities — the astrologers, the Tarot card readers, the psalmists, the new agers and so on — and with that, the search for self and the quest for God.

"Spirituality can simply become a search for the alternative feel-good factor or an escape into a purely personal *pietism wholly directed* towards one's own self-fulfilment, and based largely on feeling and emotion. Darkness and evil are never very far from us, nor is the darker side of our human nature."

However, there were signs of hope. "Even in some of the tragedies of this past 12 months or so, hope for the future has emerged. The quiet dignity of Mrs Lawrence or the compelling fortitude of the Dunblane parents have perhaps been the most telling and persuasive evidences of human virtue and worth. They are not alone."

In his Canterbury Cathedral sermon, Dr Carey said: "In our society, that feels at times so adrift from its moral, historical and institutional roots, I detect an increasing desire in people to find a spiritual home. We have seen it expressed this year in the response to the killings at Dunblane and to the murder of Philip Lawrence.

"It has been there, too, in the debates on morality and the call for our millennium celebrations to be something *much more than a trade fair* or a street party."

He urged his congregation to embark on a "spiritual journey towards God" to find fulfilment. He also called for the church and society to do more to meet the needs of the poor and homeless.

"As we go to our homes today, we should not forget the needs of the homeless we see around us, whether in Canterbury or London or other major cities. Surely one of the most distressing and damning sights of the late 20th century is the number of people sleeping rough in doorways or under cardboard boxes."

Cardinal Basil Hume, Archbishop of Westminster, emphasised the importance of living a life of faith, urging worshippers not to squeeze God out of their daily lives.

In his homily at Westminster Cathedral, he said: "Remember, too, that crowd of martyrs, men and women, many in our own day, who died because they believed. Be proud to be of their number, explorers of the truth like doctors of the church, witnesses to our faith like the martyrs.

"Tough in mind and spirit, we shall have no part in squeezing him out of our culture and our daily lives. Let our voices be heard. God *became man and dwelt* among us. That is our faith."

The Bishop of Lincoln, the Right Rev Robert Hardy, who boycotted his cathedral in protest at ongoing difficulties there, preached at two country churches without their own vicars. He spoke out against consumerism.

Hope: "There is dearth of concrete values"

Papal message, page 13
Queen's broadcast, page 20

ROB HOWARTH

Prince William receiving roses from an admirer after the Christmas service at Sandringham yesterday

Red roses for shy Prince

By Carol Midgley

AN ADMIRER of Prince William presented him with a Christmas gift of red roses at Sandringham yesterday.

The Prince, aged 14, looked *embarrassed but smiled* when the blonde girl thrust forward the bouquet as he greeted well-wishers after the Royal Family's traditional church service.

The flowers were among several gifts which the Prince accepted during his walk back to Sandringham House from St Mary Magdalene Church with the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Prince of Wales and other members of the Royal Family.

Yesterday about 1,000 people turned out to greet the 17-member royal party on the outing compared to about 4,000 last year. The Queen, surrounded by her six grandchildren, looked relaxed and happy as she accepted presents from the crowd.

Wearing a tangerine-coloured coat with matching hat, she drove to church in the royal Daimler, accompanied by Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother, who wore purple, and Princess Margaret, who chose a red cape and white hat. The rest of the party was led by the Duke of Edinburgh and the Princess Royal, who walked from Sandringham House to the church on the Queen's Norfolk estate.

Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie delighted the crowd in matching blue velvet muffs and berets. Their mother, the Duchess of York, remained behind at Wood Farm, Wolferton, near Sandringham House, where she is spending Christmas.

Princess on cover, page 3

'Human bomb' kills two in church

By Roger Boyes

TWO sisters were killed and many other people left seriously injured after a woman blew herself up in a small German church crowded with worshippers on Christmas Eve.

Minutes after the church bells stopped pealing for the midnight service in the Protestant Church in Sindlingen, on the fringes of Frankfurt's financial centre, the woman, in her thirties but not yet identified, detonated grenades strapped to her body.

The two sisters, aged 59 and 61, were sitting close to her. Ten other people were kept in hospital and some, including a 12-year-old girl, were said to be in a serious condition. There were about 70 people at the service.

"Christmas Eve — it's simply inconceivable," said Manfred Feist, a spokesman for Frankfurt police. Religious and political motives were thought unlikely.

"The evidence indicates that she was distressed and wanted to kill herself in a spectacular action," said Herr Feist.

Suicide clue, page 15

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Fire arrests

A woman died and her two children were injured in a fire at their house. Two people have been arrested........Page 4

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Brief white Christmas is cold comfort for punters

By Robin Young

BOOKMAKERS face a payout of at least six figures today after a light dusting of snow gave some parts of the country their first white Christmas for more than 20 years.

Sprinklings of snow in London, Norwich, Manchester and Newcastle appeared sufficient for punters to claim winnings.

Graham Sharpe, a spokesman for William Hill, said bets on snow falling during the 24 hours to midnight last *night* had been placed for Glasgow, Birmingham, Bristol, Leeds, Newquay, Southampton and Nottingham as well as the four centres where snow fell early yesterday.

"The weather centres in the *main* cities will contact us on Boxing Day to let us know officially what has happened in each of them," he said.

The wait proved particularly tense for two punters in Cannock, Staffordshire, who wagered £3,500 on snow falling in four cities. Their choice of Newcastle, at odds of two to one, ensured a £7,000 win, but they were waiting yesterday to learn whether Birmingham, Glasgow and Cardiff might also oblige.

The biggest winner in the capital was James Sexton, a public relations consultant, who gave 1,300 clients Christmas presents of a £1 bet each on snow falling in London. They won when it snowed for almost 30 minutes up to 5.15am yesterday, including on the London Weather Centre. Most had melted by dawn.

Simon Clare, a spokesman for Ladbroke's, said it was the first time his company had paid out in London since 1976. Mr Sharpe said William Hill regarded it as the capital's first officially acknowledged white Christmas since 1970.

Forecast, page 22

Bank chief expects early rates rise

INTEREST rates will have to increase early next year to counter inflation, according to Eddie George, Governor of the Bank of England.

He also spoke of his worries about the single European currency, saying that conflict among member states over interest rates could cause tensions which would weaken the euro.

In an interview with *Le Figaro*, Mr George said that the British economy was showing solid growth, with unemployment falling and inflation at its lowest for a generation. "But we are also witnessing a recovery of expansion owing to consumption as is shown by strong support for the money supply. In order to contain this growth, it will be necessary, sooner or later, to increase interest rates."

The basic rate for bank borrowing was raised by a quarter point to 6 per cent on October 30 as the Bank and Kenneth Clarke, the Chancellor, sought to slow down the economy to keep the Government on target for an inflation rate of 2.5 per cent.

Last month, the Bank's quarterly inflation report gave warning that further rises would be necessary, but Mr Clarke's tight Budget staved off rises before Christmas. The City and the Confederation of British Industry both agree rates must rise before the election.

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هكذا في الأصل

Complaints body calls for changes in the law to end public suspicion

Register police Masons, says watchdog

By Richard Ford
Home Correspondent

POLICE officers should be compelled to reveal if they are Freemasons to remove public suspicions about Masonic influence within the service, a complaints watchdog recommends today.

The proposal to require officers to register their membership of the Masons and similar organisations by law is likely to meet strong opposition from organisations representing rank-and-file officers. But the Police Complaints Authority says that a public register is needed to stop the public thinking that officers who are Masons might put their loyalty to the brotherhood before their duties.

Until a statutory system is set up, officers should declare their membership of the Freemasons and similar organisation in an entry on their personal files, says the Authority's submission to the Home Affairs select committee inquiry into Freemasonry in the police and judiciary. "Although some would clearly refuse, such an initiative would at least start to dismantle the present culture of secrecy."

The Authority is backing the Association of Chief Police Officers, which has urged the Home Secretary to introduce legislation for a compulsory register of police interests. It would make officers disclose membership of any organisation whose articles of association demanded a bond of loyalty from their members.

The PCA says that there is a perception among many members of the public that Masons who are police officers might be tempted to put their loyalty to their Brethren before their official duties.

The PCA says public suspicion is shared by some non-Masons in the police who had privately expressed their concerns. The submission says that while very few complaints allege that misconduct has occurred as a direct result of an officer's membership of the Freemasons, there were rather more cases involving suspicion of Masonic influence.

It highlights a number of cases involving Freemasonry including one where an officer's involvement with the organisation appeared to raise serious concern. In a case involving allegations that residents of a privately-run residential care home had been subject to serious abuse, it emerged that the proprietor of the home and a middle ranking officer had a close relationship and were members of the same Lodge. "Similar suggestions have arisen in a case involving the systematic abuse of children in a local authority home and in another involving allegations of corruption against the force's Criminal Investigation Department.

"Such examples give the impression to the general public that membership of a Masonic Lodge may involve police officers in unhealthy relationships which could influence the way in which they carry out their duties," the submission says.

It adds that though anecdotal evidence suggests that the influence of Freemasonry in most police forces has declined over recent years, there were some officers who believed that their careers had been adversely affected by their refusal to join the Masons.

In October the Association of Chief Police Officers called on officers and civilian staff to register openly their membership of the Freemasons. However, the Police Superintendents' Association and the Police Federation have serious reservations.

The Commons Home Affairs select committee held the first public session of its inquiry into the influence of Freemasonry in the police and judiciary last week.

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Inquiry urged on training site sales

By Valerie Elliott
Whitehall Editor

THE Comptroller and Auditor General, Sir John Bourn, is being asked to investigate the alleged loss of £21.5 million after the Government's sale of sites formerly used as skilled training centres.

Labour has referred the matter to the National Audit Office after James Paice, an Education and Employment Minister, disclosed that 14 sites had been sold for £14.7 million, despite a value of £36.2 million placed on the 14 properties by the NAO in June 1991.

The sites in question are at Leicester, East Lancashire, Chelmsford, Leeds, Wakefield, Edinburgh, Southampton, Slough, Reading, Twickenham, Portsmouth, St Helens, Cardiff and Deptford, southeast London.

Some of the sites were acquired by Astra Training Services which also received £11 million from the Government. But three years ago Astra collapsed with debts of over £15 million.

Stephen Byers, Labour's training spokesman, said: "The sale of the skills training centres has been a sorry saga. This new disclosure that the sites have been sold for less than half their value is a matter of great concern and requires a full investigation."

He added: "Astra went into receivership because of Government cuts in spending on training. This latest turn of events shows how misguided such a policy was."

MARTIN BEDDALL

Dogs not even for Christmas

THESE two mongrel puppies were among 27 dogs rescued by the Battersea Dogs Home over Christmas, including ten yesterday (Carol Midgley writes). The three-month-old labrador crosses, one male and one female, were found in a dustbin on Christmas Eve. Steve Lynn, head of kennels, said: "They were pretty cold and very hungry when they were found, but they are doing well now. They had been very deliberately placed inside a box inside a dustbin. If they had stayed there longer they could have been picked up by refuse collectors. My guess is that they were the last two puppies out of a litter and the owner has not been able to find homes for them and panicked. However, I want to stress we will always take in puppies for people who cannot keep them." The other rescued dogs included a mongrel puppy found freezing in a London park after being abandoned, and several more picked up while wandering the streets. By law all the dogs will have to be kept for seven days to enable their owners to collect them before new homes can be allocated.

☐ A cat was rescued when it became stuck in ice on a frozen pond in Bridgwater, Somerset, yesterday. Firefighters freed the cat by breaking up the ice with pickaxe handles. It was said to be distressed and cold, but otherwise unharmed.

Police investigate display of IRA rifle in exhibition on Troubles

By Nicholas Watt, Chief Ireland Correspondent

A MUSEUM in Londonderry is being investigated by police after it displayed an assault rifle used by IRA terrorists, in an exhibition on the Troubles.

Detectives in the city visited the award-winning Tower Museum this week after it admitted that an AK47 Kalashnikov which forms the centrepiece of Ulster's first exhibition on the contemporary Troubles once belonged to the IRA. The RUC confirmed that it had opened an investigation.

The museum insisted that the decision to display the IRA rifle had been cleared with the RUC. Brian Lacey, the director of museum services in Londonderry, said: "It is an original weapon and was in use by republicans. But it has been decommissioned and has been inspected by the RUC. We are obliged to do that."

Mr Lacey would not say how the museum had secured the weapon, although he said that it had not come directly from the IRA. He added: "We have had co-operation from various organisations. We approached official and other organisations that are part of the conflict."

In the exhibition, the assault rifle is held by a dummy dressed up as an IRA terrorist with a menacing face peering through a balaclava. The gunman is one of four dummies in the exhibition which are designed to show all sides of the Troubles. The IRA terrorist, who is described by the museum simply as an "IRA volunteer", stands next to a loyalist terrorist, dressed in the uniform of the outlawed Ulster Defence Association, who is flanked by an armed soldier and an RUC officer holding a gas mask. The dummies are secured behind glass panelling to prevent anyone from seizing the weapons.

The exhibition at the Tower Museum, which was made the National Heritage IBM Museum of the Year in 1994, also displays debris from the 1972 IRA bombing of Londonderry's Guildhall and milk bottles used as petrol bombs during the riots in the city's nationalist Bogside in the 1970s.

The inclusion of a real terrorist weapon has horrified a leading Conservative MP who has also condemned the museum for placing IRA and loyalist gunmen on a par with members of the security forces. Andrew Hunter, chairman of the Tory backbench Northern Ireland committee, said: "This exhibition is perpetuating the propaganda of the IRA. It conceals the fact that the IRA is a minority within a minority that has murdered and maimed almost without apology. It is sick that anyone in authority can treat the security forces on the same level as the IRA and the UDA."

The museum vigorously defended its decision to display the weapons. Mr Lacey said: "The middle classes and cultural institutions have avoided talking about the Troubles. If we don't do that now, how can we face up to it?"

The display in the Tower Museum exhibition

[redacted]

Graves desecrated in Ulster cemetery

Eighteen Catholic graves were found desecrated in a Northern Irish cemetery yesterday. The graves in Redburn cemetery, Holywood, Co Down, including the headstone of James McCartin, a republican killed by loyalist paramilitaries in 1972, were covered in paint and graffiti. Locals said all the damaged graves were Catholic although police investigating the attack refused to confirm that.

Police said they were investigating the attack to establish whether the vandalism was prompted by sectarianism. The council cleaned most of the graves yesterday.

Paedophile ring arrests

A senior police officer was among seven men arrested by detectives investigating a paedophile ring at the council-run Aberdare Leisure Centre in Glamorgan, it emerged last night. The officer, a married father-of-two in his early 50s based at Merthyr Tydfil, has been freed on police bail and suspended while the Police Complaints Authority investigates. Detectives are interviewing two boys aged 14 and 15. It is alleged that the elder boy worked as a prostitute.

Hunt widens for mother

Police have widened their search for a woman with postnatal depression who went missing on Friday. Laura Templeton, 22, of Kirkmuirhill, South Lanarkshire, who has daughters aged four and eight months, disappeared after apparently having a panic attack. She is 5ft 2in, slim with long dark brown hair, green eyes and a pale complexion. She was wearing a black top, cream skirt, black jacket, black tights and black ankle boots.

Faulty wire killed girl

A girl who was electrocuted as she switched on her family's Christmas tree lights on Saturday died because of a defective wire in the power supply. Cara Weatherstone, 6, died instantly when she switched on a table lamp into which the lights were plugged at her home in Hornsea, east Yorkshire. The finding follows detailed investigations by the police, trading standards officers and officials from Yorkshire Electricity.

Pupils contract meningitis

More than 300 schoolgirls have been offered meningitis vaccinations after two sixth-form students contracted the illness. Pupils from Maidstone Grammar School for Girls, Kent, were recalled to the school on Christmas Eve for an emergency surgery, and helplines were set up for parents. So far 80 per cent of sixth-form girls have been contacted. The two 16-year-old girls found to be suffering from meningitis were recovering in hospital yesterday.

Ministers oppose EU grant

The Government is to resist a proposal that the European Commission spend £4.2 million to help lawyers and judges improve their knowledge of EU law. The Commission plans a three-year programme of grants to institutions that offer to promote training in EU law, so that lawyers have the knowledge to assert citizens' rights. British ministers say this would be unnecessary as the profession already has a duty to maintain its learning.

Coastguard undermanned

The coastguard station at Stornoway on Lewis in the Western Isles, which has responsibility for the busy Minch shipping lanes, was below the basic staffing levels on 58 days in the year up to August, the chief coastguard, John Astbury, has admitted. Mr Astbury has assured the Western Isles MP, Calum MacDonald, that the staffing was being reviewed. Mr MacDonald said it was shocking that a key station was below approved levels.

Teenager drowns in canal

Police yesterday praised the bravery of a man who jumped into a canal in an attempt to save his drowning friend. Richard Harrison, 17, fell into the water at the canal lock near a public house in his home town of Kinver, Staffordshire, as he walked with friends along a footbridge on Christmas Eve. Mr Harrison was dead on arrival at hospital in Dudley in spite of attempts by the friend and a police officer to resuscitate him.

Ulster shop sets sales record

A Northern Ireland store set the record for a single day's trading by Marks & Spencer. More than 30,000 customers spent almost £1 million at the store in Sprucefield, near Lisburn, Co Antrim, on Monday, half of it in the food hall. The amount was the highest spent on food in any Marks & Spencer store across the world. Andrew Keating, the manager, said customers were queueing at 7 am when the store opened.

Baby wins bet for parents

An 8lb boy born at one minute past midnight is believed to have been the first baby delivered on Christmas Day. Emma Daniels, 19, had been due to give birth three days earlier at the Whittington Hospital in north London, and her family began putting bets on her delivering a Christmas baby as the 25th approached. Ernie Gibson, 22, the child's father, said: "We may call him something Christmassy for a middle name but not his first."

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JOHN LEWIS
Department Stores

Family had no idea that former Student of the Year had been dismissed from hospital

Sacking secret of nurse facing murder charge

By Shirley English and Stephen Farrell

WHEN Lucille McLauchlan flew out to Saudi Arabia in August to take up a well-paid job at the King Fahd Hospital her family assumed it was another step in a career of uninterrupted distinction.

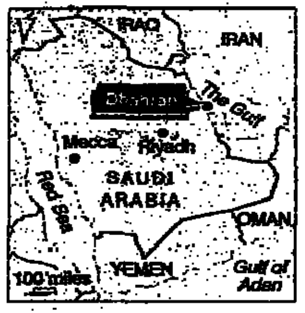
The 31-year-old former Student Nurse of the Year had told them that the closure of her department at King's Cross Hospital, Dundee, left her career options limited, and that it was time for a change. They had no idea of the shadow she was leaving behind or the troubles ahead.

Ms McLauchlan was in fact dismissed from the King's Cross Hospital in May for gross misconduct, although the hospital had indeed closed the department where she worked. The allegations against her are understood to centre on the theft of credit cards from patients and a report is believed to have been submitted to the Procurator Fiscal's office. A spokesman for Dundee Teaching Hospitals issued a statement that read: "Lucille McLauchlan was dismissed in May 1996 by Dundee Teaching Hospitals for gross misconduct following a police investigation. Dundee Teaching Hospitals have no knowledge of any link between this person and any events in Saudi Arabia."

Ms McLauchlan father Stanley, 52, a marine engineer and former union official from Dundee, insisted that the family knew nothing of the sacking. "My daughter has dedicated her life to nursing and to the care of others. She graduated as Student Nurse of the Year and has won an award for her nursing abilities," he said outside the home of his son John, where the family had gathered for Christmas.

John McLauchlan, 28, an oil-rig worker, also of Dundee, said: "Our thoughts today are with Lucy. We are all petrified. My parents are extremely upset, they are going through hell. It is worrying at the best of times. This is the first Christmas she has ever been away and for this to happen is unthinkable, but we are a close family and that should help. We are relying on the Embassy. My sister's life is in their hands."

Stanley McLauchlan said he was mystified by the suggestion that his daughter had been sacked by King's Cross Hospital. "Lucy left the National Health Service after the unit in which she worked for four years was closed. The nature of her job changed and the lack of career opportunities led her to opt to work as a nurse overseas.



"The Saudi job came highly recommended. She was very excited at the prospect of going over and, up to this incident, had thoroughly enjoyed the four months she had spent over there."

Mr McLauchlan said his sister told him she had been arrested along with Ms Parry because they both worked on the same ward as the murdered nurse, but there was no evidence linking them to her murder. He said the family felt sorry for the relatives of Yvonne Gilford but he truly believed that his sister was innocent.

"It is a tragedy and I'm torn between being upset and being absolutely petrified that they are trying to pin it on my sister," Mr McLauchlan said.

He said his sister had always spoke of enjoying her time in Saudi Arabia and had planned to visit in the new year. "She never had any problems with the strict regime. She always covered up when she went out and never drank. She was always out cycling, swimming or keeping fit. She was really looking forward to her fiancé going out to visit at the end of January," he said. He said he was confident that his sister was a "fairly strong character" and would be able to cope.

Ms McLauchlan was educated at Menzieshill High School in Dundee and trained at Ninewells Hospital in the city before moving to Stracathro Hospital, Brechin, Angus, where she graduated as a state-registered nurse in 1991.

Ms McLauchlan joined King's Cross Hospital's infectious diseases unit soon afterwards. She lived with her parents until her departure and spoke to them by phone from Saudi Arabia at least twice a week.

Her parents have made inquiries about travelling to Saudi, but have made no decision. "It will depend on whether they can get access to Lucy. If they are told they will be allowed to see her, then they will be going," John McLauchlan said.

"Any man with a daughter will know what my dad is feeling at the moment. He feels helpless about this and the fact we don't know anything about the Saudi legal system or anything. It is a nightmare."

DUNDEE PRESS AGENCY

Lucille McLauchlan pictured at the King Fahd Military Complex. She had spoken of enjoying her time in Saudi

Murder victim was wife of arts critic

By Audrey Magee

THE estranged wife of a prominent French film producer has been murdered while on a Christmas holiday to Ireland. Sophie Toscan du Plantier, 38, was found battered to death near her holiday home in West Cork on Monday morning, three days after she arrived.

Mme du Plantier was the third wife of the film producer and cultural critic Daniel Toscan du Plantier, 55. In 1989 he was presented the Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur for his work in promoting French culture and language. Four years earlier, he was awarded the Commandeur des Arts et des Lettres. The couple married in 1991 but separated recently.

Preliminary post-mortem examination results released yesterday showed that she was hit several times about the head with a blunt instrument. Her body was found partially clothed on a remote lane about three miles from Schull, a small tourist village on the southwest coast. Police have ruled out sexual assault.

According to a police spokesman, Mme Toscan du Plantier, who was using her maiden name of Bouniol, arrived in Ireland on Friday to spend Christmas alone. She bought her two-storey holiday home about four years ago and was a frequent visitor to the area. Neighbours said she was a quiet, gentle person who kept to herself.

She hired a car on arrival in Cork and was last seen shopping in the locality on Saturday.

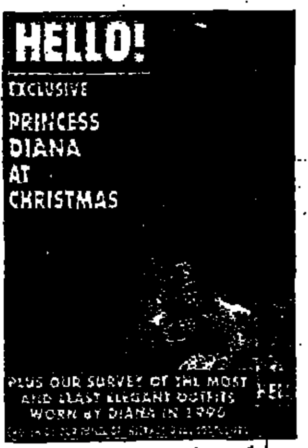
Princess home alone, but still in the picture

By Carol Midgley

DIANA, Princess of Wales, who spent her second Christmas Day away from her sons yesterday, is pictured on the cover of the next issue of *Hello!* magazine. Dressed mainly in black, she is posing alone in front of a seasonal fir-tree.

An accompanying article said the Princess planned to telephone Princes William, 14, and Harry, 12, on Christmas morning at the Norfolk estate where they spent the day with the Prince of Wales, the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and other members of the Royal Family. It is understood that the Princess spent the day preparing to fly to Australia.

Her decision to appear in *Hello!*, the magazine which recently serialised the Duchess of York's autobiography and has featured a succession of articles about the Duchess, will be seen as an indication that she does not intend to keep a low profile during 1997 after her divorce. It is unclear whether she was paid for the photograph.



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EXCLUSIVE
PRINCESS
DIANA
AT
CHRISTMAS
PLUS OUR SURVEY OF THE MOST AND LEAST ELEGANT OUTFITS WORN BY DIANA IN 1996

The Princess, alone but smiling, on the cover

In the article she is praised for her commitment to her charity work. Pamela, Lady Harlech, chairman of the English National Ballet, of which the Princess is patron, said: "She is absolutely fantastic. She loves the dancers and what is so marvellous about her is that, if she is interested in a charity, she doesn't dabble. She works really hard."

The magazine says the Princess had bought most of her Christmas presents by October and that her celebrations effectively ended on Christmas Eve when her sons left Kensington Palace for Sandringham.

"While people all over the country are tucking into turkey with their families around them, Diana will probably, as usual, be at home alone," says the magazine.

In 1992 the Princess attended church with the Royal Family at Sandringham then spent the rest of the day with her brother, Earl Spencer, at Althorp.

☐ A panel of leading fashion experts polled by *Hello!* voted her best outfit of the year a simple white Versace dress which she wore during on a trip to Italy in June.

☐ The Duchess of York was also absent from the church service at Sandringham, although Princesses Beatrice and Eugenie attended with the Duke of York.

Eat, drink and be merry. Then take an anti-fat drug

By Nigel Hawkes, Science Editor

AN AMERICAN drug company has an answer for those worried about the effects of seasonal overeating: a drug that prevents the body from absorbing almost a third of the fat that is eaten.

Hoffman La Roche sought approval this month from the US Food and Drug Administration for Xenical, which blocks enzymes in the intestine that break up dietary fats. The undigested fats go straight to the colon for excretion without the chance to find their way on to the hips.

Xenical is the first in what is expected to be a series of anti-fat drugs reaching the market, after research has uncovered genes and hormones that help to determine how people eat and how food is metabolised and stored. "We are just beginning to understand the biological and neurological mechanisms of obesity," says Dr Fred Fiedorek, of the University of North Carolina. "There are a lot of drugs in the pipeline that represent an exciting time for obese patients."

The best-selling obesity drug in the United States is Redux, which stimulates production of the "feel-good" brain chemical serotonin. By making people feel satisfied, it can curb appetite, but it does not work for everybody. Some are not helped at all, while others find the pounds piling back rapidly. Drugs in the pipeline will aim to adjust how the body maintains weight, without dangerous side-effects.

They include tests by Amgen of leptin, a hormone discovered by Rockefeller University in New York which signals the brain to stop eating when the body has stored enough fat. However, studies suggest that many overweight people have high levels of leptin, and may not be helped.

In February, Neurogen Corporation is to start a trial in which the chemical neuropeptide-Y (NPY), the most powerful appetite-stimulant known, is blocked. Blocking the brain's ability to sense NPY could eliminate food cravings; mice slim down markedly when treated with it. The first tests on humans will involve 50 volunteers.

Wyeth-Ayerst is testing a drug that stimulates metabolism regulators called beta-3 adrenergic receptors. Many people have defective receptors, and burn calories too slowly, so that they put on weight. The beta-3 stimulator aims to help burn fat stores.

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Two held after petrol bomb through letterbox sets fire to house on Christmas Day

Mother killed and two children hurt in arson attack

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

A MOTHER died and her two children were seriously injured after a petrol bomb was put through the letter box of their home on Christmas morning.

Police have launched a murder inquiry after Michelle Bone-Knell, 34, died as the fire swept through the terraced house. Her common-law husband, Graham Perrins, 33, escaped by jumping from an upstairs window.

The couple's 18-month-old baby, Damien, was rescued from the front bedroom of the house in Bushbury, Wolverhampton. He suffered 50 per cent burns and was said to be in a "critical condition" in the major injuries unit at Selly Oak hospital in Birmingham.

Chantel Perrins, 3, was also taken to the hospital, but Mr Perrins asked for information about her condition not to be released. He was said to be in a "serious but stable condition" suffering from burns and smoke inhalation.

A man and a woman in their thirties were arrested by police within an hour of the blaze. They were taken to Wolverhampton police station where they were questioned and held overnight. Detective Superintendent Sandy Craig, of Wolverhampton CID, said: "At this stage we are treating the incident as a murder inquiry." He said the man and woman were not related to the victims but were known to Mr Perrins.

Neighbours made desperate attempts to rescue the couple and their children after being woken at about 2.30am by screaming and shouting. But they were beaten back by the intensity of the flames. John Shaw, 24, a next-door neighbour, said: "I went outside and there were flames coming out of the house. I looked up and saw Graham dive out of the front bedroom window and land on the concrete floor. He was covered in blood but got up and started shouting 'my kids, my kids'."

Mr Shaw said he ran round to the back of the house and smashed down the back door but was unable to enter because of the intensity of the heat.

Another neighbour, Beryl Scott, said the family had moved to the area from nearby Bilston five months ago and the children had been looking forward to Christmas. She said: "They sent cards to all their neighbours. Their front room was full of decorations."

By the time firemen arrived, the blaze was sweeping through both floors of the end-of-terrace house. The two children were revived by firefighters, who carried them from the building. Mrs Perrins was found in a rear bedroom and the two children in a front bedroom.

Assistant Divisional Fire Officer Dennis Davies said that six officers with breathing apparatus had carried out Mrs Perrins and the two children. Mrs Perrins was pronounced dead at the scene but the two children had been revived and taken to hospital.

☐ A man who jumped from the second floor of a blazing house was being treated in hospital in Northern Ireland yesterday. He was trapped when fire swept through the three-storey house in the border town of Newry, Co Down. The RUC said he suffered head injuries in the leap, but was "stable" in hospital. The blaze was believed to have started accidentally.

☐ A 26-year-old man has been charged with murder after a patient was found dead following a fire at a rehabilitation unit. The body of Paul Masters, 27, was discovered by firefighters who tackled a blaze that gutted a bedroom of the unit in Haydock, Merseyside, yesterday. Fellow patient Lee George Powell, 26, was charged with murdering Mr Masters, and will appear before St Helens magistrates today.

A boy aged four died in a fire at his home in Glenrothes, Fife, on Christmas Eve. His body was found by firemen after his grandmother had managed to rescue two other children. James Jamieson, divisional officer of Fife fire and rescue, said the death of the child, who has not been named, was a further warning to the public to be more vigilant over Christmas. "One tragedy is one too many at any time of the year, but especially at this time," Mr Jamieson said.

Damien Perrins, left, and his sister Chantel were seriously injured in the blaze at their home in Wolverhampton

Caller gives clues to disco murder

By Michael Prestage

ONE year after the murder of 18-year-old Louise Smith, detectives believe that an anonymous caller who has rung twice in the past few days could hold the key to the killer. They are urging the man, who has already given vital information, to contact them again.

The caller was one of 90 to ring a hotline set up by Avon and Somerset police in their hunt for the killer of Miss Smith, a clerical assistant, who was last seen walking home from Spirals nightclub in Yate, near Bristol, at 2.15am on Christmas Day. Her body was discovered seven weeks later at an isolated quarry near her home in Chipping Sodbury.

Inspector Keith Jones, a police spokesman, said: "We believe the anonymous caller has information vital to identifying the murderer. The caller was concerned about identifying himself to the police. What we are saying is that the matter causing him concern can be resolved."

Police attended this week's Christmas Eve disco at Spirals to question partygoers as they arrived and handed out leaflets bearing Miss Smith's photograph. Her parents, Robert and Gill, gave an interview in which Mr Smith said: "I miss her so much. It's worse now than ever. You can't ignore Christmas. Other people want to celebrate, but I just wish it was over."

Mrs Smith said: "Louise loved going out. I just can't stop wondering what she had to go through and how long she had to go through it."

Police have issued a profile of the killer, who is believed to be a local man, unable to cope with stress, who talks a lot about the case, is interested in pornography and is married or in a stable relationship.

Louise Smith: killed after Christmas party

Next year's sprouts could be brighter

By Robin Young

BOTANISTS are working to brighten dinner plates by turning Brussels sprouts red. But though they have already produced sprouts the hue of red cabbage, the colour tends to drain away when the vegetables are cooked.

As yet none of the red varieties produces sprouts sufficiently firm, uniform and colour-retentive to be adopted by commercial growers or supermarkets, but Sutton's Seeds of Torquay, Devon, has had some success in the amateur horticultural market this year with a rubicund innovation called Falstaff.

Another company, A. L. Tozer of Cobham, Kent, has a purplish variety in its catalogue. A spokesman said: "It is not very refined or all that brilliant, but we do sell some of it. It is still on a trial number — we have not bothered to name it. Frankly we have more success with F1 hybrid parsnips, spring onions and courgettes, but if there is sufficient interest we would put money into more work on red Brussels sprouts."

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Racing around the world to celebrate Christmas

Simon Hart, a British physicist and *Times* Internet reader, reports that celebrations at the South Pole are brief, fun and frenetic. Yet sombre reminders of the terrible price paid by the early explorers of the harsh snowscape are never far away

YESTERDAY I celebrated my fourth Christmas at the South Pole. Although we have only just passed Midsummer's Day, the temperature is still hovering around 20 degrees below zero.

The festivities were a mixture of familiar traditions and some peculiar to the Pole. A couple of weeks ago the first decorations started to appear, including a tree.

There is no church here but a US Navy chaplain flew in a few nights ago and performed a service in the galley. He even brought an entire brass band with him, made up of volunteers from the Antarctic coastal station of McMurdo. The Pole is very busy in summer so the holiday lasts only two days, starting on Christmas Eve.

We try to cram a lot of celebrations into that time. The customary wild parties started on Monday night and several people woke up the next day with heads shaved Mohican style to complement their hangovers.

At 11am on Christmas Eve we had our annual Race Around the World, a 2.7 mile-long run which took us right around the geographic South Pole and hence through all 24 time zones. Running outside in the cold is hard enough but the Pole is at an effective altitude of 100,000 ft so the air is very thin and even walking this distance can be difficult for new arrivals. Not everyone chooses to run, though. Some ski, some ride snowmobiles and a few hardy souls try cycling. The atmosphere is more that of a carnival than a competition.

The race was followed by a gift exchange with some interesting rules. Everyone brings a wrapped present to the galley and places it on the table. People are chosen by lottery and they get to either take a present from the table or "steal" someone else's present if they have taken a fancy to it. That person then has the same choice. With 170 people on station the process continues for many hours and is lots of fun.

Life at the South Pole can be difficult at times but one luxury we do have is the best food on the continent and at no time is this more evident than on Christmas Day. Everybody made a special effort to make the day perfect: volunteers formed a small army of helpers to assist the cooks. The galley was transformed with table cloths, decorations and candles and the men and women of the crew who are usually dressed in oily parkas and fleeces suddenly appeared in shirts, ties and evening dresses.

Fortified by several glasses of champagne, my three fellow Brits and I treated the Americans to a rather shaky rendition of the national anthem and they all responded with an even shakier *Star-Spangled Banner*. After that the galley erupted into the biggest food fight I have ever seen. They'll be scraping the cream cakes off the wall for weeks.

Our next big celebration will be New Year's Eve, when we hammer the new South Pole marker into the snow. The South Pole is stationary but the ice sheet on which the station sits moves about 30ft each year.

From the new Pole all the previous ones can be seen stretching away into the distance: 2,500 ft away is the Pole that Scott and his men arrived at 85 years ago this coming January 17.

No cards and no presents, but the snow is guaranteed

BY RUSSELL JENKINS

THEY are dedicated scientists carrying out research vital to the future of the planet in the Earth's most inhospitable landscape, but they do not allow this to disrupt their festivities.

The 90 scientists, geologists and support staff at the British Antarctic Survey's main field research station at Rothera spent their Christmas day taking part in the unofficial South Pole Olympics. Beside ancient glaciers and an icy grey-blue sea, the British contingent competed to push 45-gallon drums filled with water around the station.

Others took part in the pancake race or the "wellie-throwing" competition. As Simon Gill, the Rothera station commander and Antarctic veteran, put it: "Going to the South Pole doesn't make you sensible."

There was little of the privation suffered by Scott and his party during his race to the Pole. Rothera's two professional cooks produced a lavish turkey lunch accompanied by champagne and brandy.

Even the two parties of British scientists spending a less comfortable time on a field trip out on the ice, studying the movement of the gigantic ice shelves, found a piece of Christmas pudding in their sledge packs.

It is summer at the South Pole. Antarctica's thousand hours of sunshine each year are crammed between October and April. Mr Gill said: "We have had sunny days and 24-hour daylight. It doesn't usually get much above zero but the sunshine can be intense. People can wear T-shirts so long as they slap on lots of suncream."

The biggest privation is the lack of Christmas presents and cards from the outside world. The base receives post once a month when the plane arrives from Port Stanley in the Falkland Islands.

At the moment, there are six sacks of mail lined up waiting to go and none will arrive until the 28th: "It doesn't matter. We are used to delayed mail."

Mr Gill, whose family come from near Redcar on the northeast coast, first came to the Antarctic a decade ago. He worked as a carpenter and decided to stay as a spectator to some of the world's most extraordinary flora and fauna.

"Recently I had an amazing experience when we took one of the small 40-horsepower boats out to one of the islands," said Mr Gill. "We were surrounded by six killer whales. They came right up to the boat, swam around us and underneath. It wasn't clear who was more interested, them or us. They were so inquisitive that they followed us all the way back to base."

The South Pole may be the ultimate destination these days for well-heeled package tourists but the scientists who live and work there learn to respect the hostile climate. Mr Gill was mountaineering when a colleague stepped into some loose ice and fell 90ft into a narrow crevasse. He abseiled down, discovered his friend head down but still breathing and helped to haul him back to the surface. "That is the closest I have come to death on the ice," he said.

The Antarctic is an international community with, at its peak, a population of around 3,000. But there is little fraternisation between bases; the nearest is miles away.

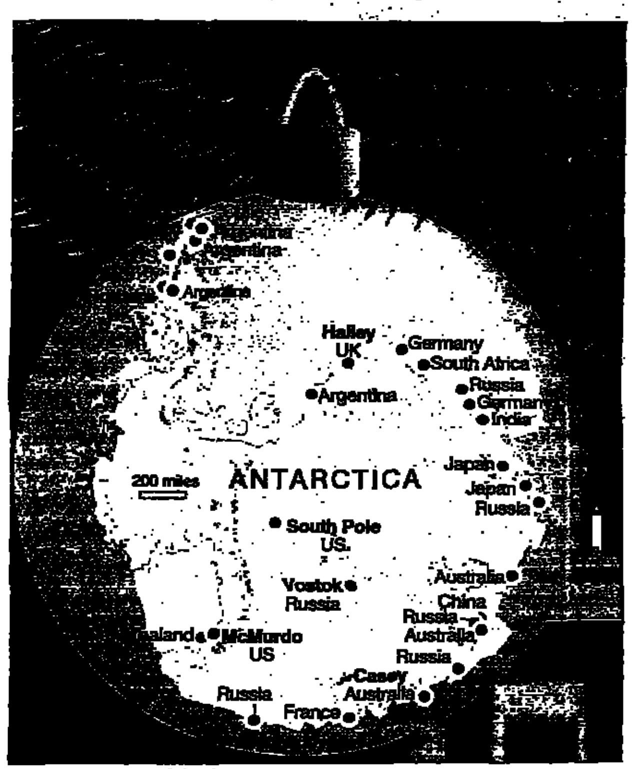
Besides the 94 stationed at Rothera, or those preparing for field trips, there are six British scientists studying the habits of fur seals and the albatross on Bird Island in the South Atlantic. Five geophysicists are stationed at King Edward Point field station, carrying out a seismic investigation into the Earth's structure. Two lonely souls are manning the most remote museum on earth, the research station at Port Lockroy, and there are 19 scientists on the Halley research station looking into radio waves.

The extreme isolation can become a problem with more than one person falling victim to "Halley's Stare", looking preoccupied or "not all there".

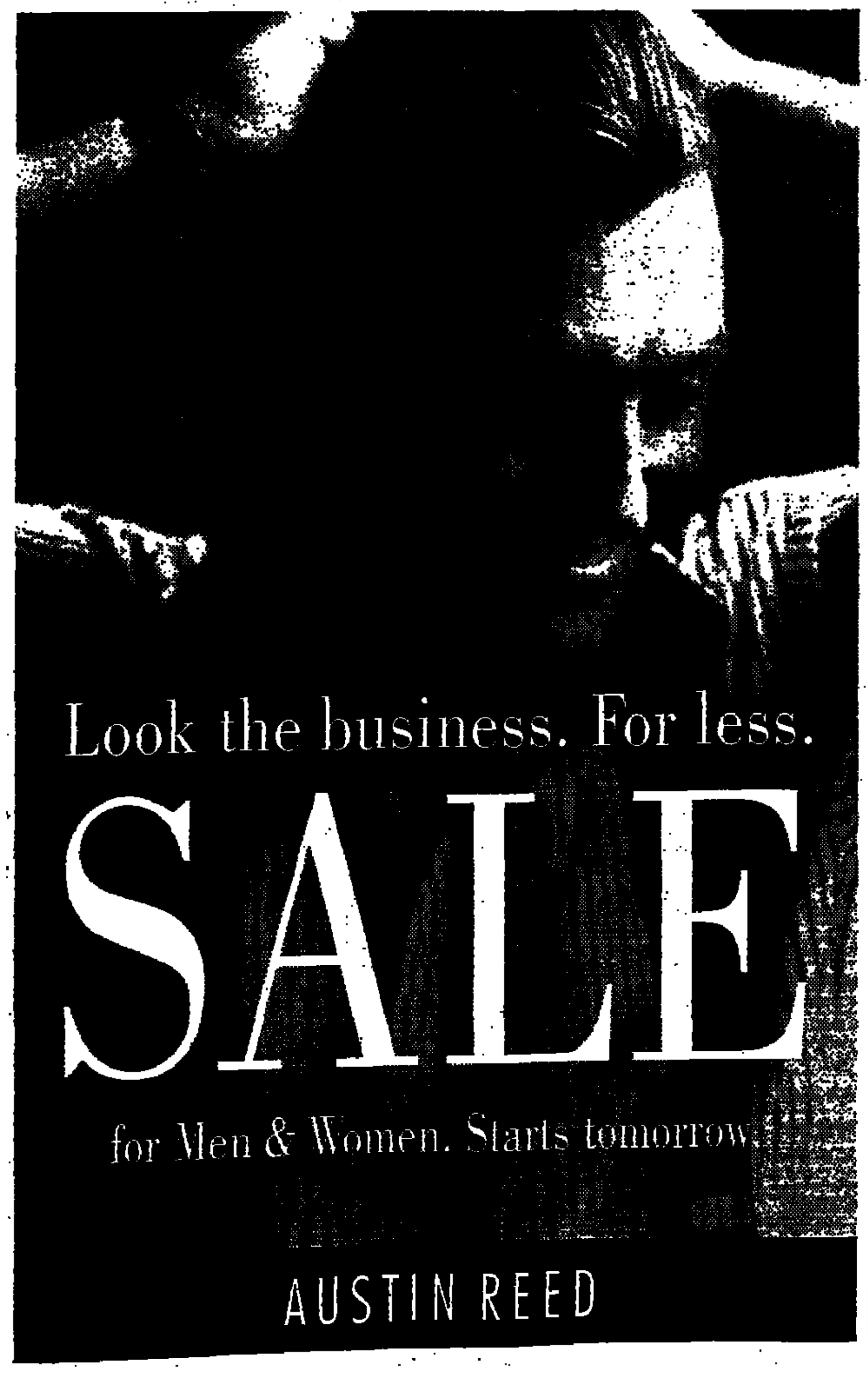
But, besides the scenery, there is one real consolation for spending the festive season at one of the loneliest spots on Earth. "At least we are guaranteed we are going to have a white Christmas," said Mr Gill.

BRITISH ANTARCTIC SURVEY

Flags snap in the wind as scientists prepare for Christmas at a remote Antarctic field camp. There will be some seasonal cheer in their rations



A population of about 3,000 lives and works on the national bases scattered widely across Antarctica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هكذا من الاصل

As you prepare for the midwinter madness that grips the stores, here is our guide to what's on offer . . .

Where early birds get the best bargains

LONDON

☐ **Debenhams**
334-348 Oxford Street, W1. and branches nationwide (0171-408 4444). From Dec 27; today in Scotland.
Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store.

☐ **Fenwick**
New Bond Street, W1 (0171-629 9161) and branches nationwide. From Dec 27 for three weeks. Newcastle from Dec 28.
Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store. Womenswear: Nicole Farhi velvet jeans from £129 to £59; John Smedley ribbed cardigans from £75 to £39; Ben de Lisi black ribbed wool-mix jackets from £419 to £209; Admyra blonde wool and cashmere long coats from £189 to £79.

☐ **Harrods**
87 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-730 1234). From Jan 8-Feb 1.
Up to 55 per cent off items throughout the store with an extra 10 per cent off for Harrods account customers' purchases made on Jan 11. Customers spending £200 or more in a single transaction during the first four days of the sale can enter a draw to win a Volkswagen Passat. Sale items include up to 75 per cent off selected John Galliano womenswear; 40 per cent off Jil Sander; 30 per cent off Christian Lacroix, eg, ladies' turquoise jacket was £269, sale price £189; 40 per cent off French Connection knitwear, jackets, coats and skirts; 30 per cent off selected Dolce & Gabbana; 50 per cent off Kenzo, Escada and Donna Karan; Menswear: 30 per cent off Calvin Klein jeans and shirts, Armani jeans and Ralph Lauren; Burberry classic trench coat was £625, now £399; Cerruti ties were £55, now £29.95; 30-50 per cent off selected childrenswear including Paul Smith, DKNY, Versace and Moschino.

☐ **Harvey Nichols**
109-125 Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-235 5000). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off many items. During the first four days of the sale there will be an additional 10 per cent discount for Harvey Nichols' account holders on all reduced merchandise. CK jeans were £99, sale price £44.50; Georgio Armani navy suit was £695, sale price £495; women's Dolce & Gabbana mohair jacket was £780, sale price £468; Michael Kors leather trousers were £980, sale price £490; Calvin Klein jersey dress was £900, sale price £450; Dolce & Gabbana black handbags were £445, sale price £222.50; Calvin Klein black handbags were £430, sale price £215.

☐ **House of Fraser**
Army & Navy, Victoria Street, SW1 (0171-834 1234); Barkers, Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-937 5432); Dickins & Jones, Regent Street, W1 (0171-734 7070); D.H. Evans, Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629 8800) and stores nationwide (0171-963 2236). From Dec 27. Scotland: today.
Menswear: up to one third off Pierre Balmain shirts; 40 per cent off Pringle knitwear; Daniel Hechter suit was £230, now £170; YSL logo boxer shorts were £16, sale price £8. Womenswear: up to 50 per cent off Marley scarfs; dogtooth three-quarter length jacket was £90, now £60; six-button reefer jacket was £75, now £49. Homeware: Slumberland Copper Seal 4-drawer divan set was £799, now £499; Henley large sofa was £1,090, sale price £990. Electrical: Toshiba 28in colour television was £649, now £469; JVC Mini System £499, now £379; up to 50 per cent off selected china and glass.

☐ **John Lewis**
Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629 7711); Brent Cross Shopping Centre (0181-202 6535); Peter Jones, Sloane Square, SW1 (0171-730 3434) and 23 stores nationwide. From Dec 28 and Dec 31; call 0171-629 7711 to find which date is correct for your nearest branch.
Up to 50 per cent off selected lines. The "never knowingly undersold" policy is still in operation during the clearance period. Branches sell good quality seconds throughout the sale and well-priced lines bought by John Lewis at favourable rates under its "special purchase" scheme with manufacturers. Philips FW 18 micro Hi-Fi systems from £329 to £199. China seconds: Blue Italian 25cm plates from £8.50 to £4.95; Toast & Marmalade teapots from £33 to £19.75; Worcester cakeplates from £14.50 to £21.75. Curtain seconds: Solitaire plain satin 168x136cm from £49 to £25; 214x220cm from £35 to £16.50. Dress fabric seconds: 228cm cotton/polyester plain sheeting from £6.50 to £2.95. Duvets reduced to clear. Reduced furnishing fabric per metre: dupion from £7.95 to £3.95; moire from £9.95 to £4.95; tapestries from £19.50 to £9.95 and semi-plain fabrics from £13.50 to £7; printed Primrose Hill in grass and eggshell print from £8.95 to £4.95; Azalea print from £12.50 to £5.95; Portofino print from £13.50 to £6.95.

☐ **Liberty**
214-220 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-734 1234). From Dec 27 for three weeks.
Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store. Armenian rug was £5,600, sale price £2,800; Turkish Burdur carpet was £1,950, sale price £975; Iranian kilim was £850, sale price £425; Laure Japy Figaree dinner plates were £30, sale price £15; Dartington burgundy glasses were £13.25, sale price £7.95; Wedgwood California dinner plates were £19.95, sale price £9.95; Carrs silver cutlery 44-piece set was £2,799, sale price £1,399; traditional roll-arm sofa was £2,395, sale price £1,195; Liberty print cushions were £35, sale price £25. Womenswear: Gucci silk hipster pants were £509, sale price £254; Romeo Gigli velvet jacket was £755, sale price £377; Liberty orange wool jacket was £189, sale price £94.

☐ **Selfridges**
Oxford Street, W1 (0171-629 1234). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off items throughout the store. Womenswear: Jasper Conran patent jacket down from £499 to £349; CK basic jeans down from £79 to £55; Polo Ralph Lauren selected lines up to 30 per cent off. Menswear: Paul Smith, Giorgio Armani Le Collezioni and Calvin Klein selected lines up to 30 per cent off; selected YSL suits down from £325 to £225. Childrenswear: DKNY, Moschino, Versace and Armani selected lines all have 50 per cent off. China and crystal: Dartington crystal selected seconds 40 per cent off; Aynsley tableware selected seconds 33 per cent off. Carpets and flooring: 10 per cent off Amtico flooring; 12 per cent off Bruce Wood flooring; 65 per cent off Zermatt, Pembroke Twist and Perfection carpets.

REGIONS

☐ **Bentalls**
High Street, Bracknell, Berkshire (01344 424678); Broadway Centre, Ealing, London W5 (0181-567 3040); Wood Street, Kingston upon Thames, southwest London (0181-546 1001); Lakeside Shopping Centre, West Thurrock, Essex (01708 860077); The Angel Centre, Tonbridge, Kent (01732 771177); 19-23 South Street, Worthing, West Sussex (01903 231801). General inquiries (0181-546 2002). From Dec 27 for chargecard holders, Dec 28 general public.
Up to 50 per cent off most lines.

☐ **Denners**
High Street, Yeovil, Somerset (01935 444444). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off men's and women's fashions and household goods.

☐ **Hoopers**
The Promenade, Cheltenham (01242 527505); North Street, Chichester, West Sussex (01243 533103); The Strand, Torquay (01803 212754); Mount Pleasant Road, Tunbridge Wells (01892 530222); Hoopers for Men, The Great Hall, Tunbridge Wells (01892 529223) and Alderley Road, Wilmslow, Cheshire (01625 525381); Allerton Road, Bradford (01274 491311); James Street, Harrogate (01423 504091). For further details freecall 0800 318216. From Dec 27-Jan 18.
Up to 50 per cent off womenswear, including designer labels such as Jasper Conran, Valentino, Moschino and Jean Muir. Also special bargains in the linen and china departments.

FASHION

☐ **Aquascutum**
100 Regent Street, W1 (0800 282922). From Dec 27.
From 30 to 50 per cent off selected lines throughout the store. Womens cashmere mix coats were £495, sale price £325; short brown herring bone coat with velvet collar from £450 to £295; doe skin blazers from £375 to £250; men's blazers down from £295 to £195; men's double rain mac from £455 to £285.

☐ **Armando Pollini**
35 Brook Street, W1 (0171-629 7606). From Dec 27 to early Feb.
From 30 to 50 per cent reductions; brown knee elastic boots from £199 to £139; black leather bag from £285 to £142.

☐ **Austin Reed**
Branches nationwide (0800 585479). From Dec 27.
Menswear: barn coat from £169 to £99; 25 per cent off selected cotton shirts; half-price silk ties. Womenswear: taupe herringbone wool jacket from £249 to £179; selected pure wool knitwear from £49 to £29.95.

☐ **Benetton**
Branches nationwide (0171-731 4557). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent reductions.

☐ **Bertie**
36 South Molton Street, W1 (0171-493 5033); 26 branches nationwide, inquiries (0171-935 2002). Sale now on.
Ankle boots were £75, sale price £45; loafers were £69.95, sale price £44.95; mock croc knee-length boots were £59.99, sale price £29.98.

☐ **Bhs**
252-258 Oxford Street, W1 (0171-262 3288); 139 branches nationwide. From today in Scotland, Dec 27 rest of United Kingdom.
A third off selected items across all departments.

☐ **Burberry**
18-22 Haymarket, SW1; 165 Regent Street, W1 (0171-930 3343). From Dec 27.
Selected items up to 50 per cent off, eg, women's trenchcoats were £575, sale price £375; men's blazers were £325, sale price £185.

☐ **Burton**
Branches nationwide (0321 287866). From Dec 27 for four weeks.
Many lines up to a third off.

☐ **C & A**
Branches nationwide (0171-629 1244). From Dec 27. Glasgow, Aberdeen, Kilbride, today.
Up to 50 per cent discount on fashion for all the family.

☐ **Chanel**
26 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 5040); 31 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 6631). From Jan 4-11.
Minimum of 30 per cent off all ready-to-wear autumn/winter collection 1996 and a selection of shoes and accessories.

☐ **Country Casuals**
1-5 Poland Street, W1 (0171-287 5181); branches nationwide (0121-212 2405). Sale now on.
Reductions up to 50 per cent. Jersey shirts were £39.95, sale price £19.95; navy knit dresses were £65.95, sale price £45.95.

☐ **Dorothy Perkins**
Branches nationwide (0171-291 2604). From today (Scotland). Dec 27 rest of UK for four weeks.
Many items at half-price.

☐ **Emporio Armani**
191 Brompton Road, SW3 (0171-823 8818); 57-59 Long Acre, WC2 (0171-917 6882); 112a New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 8080); 84-86 King Street, Manchester M2 (0161-839 8789); 19 John Street, The Italian Centre, Glasgow G1 (0141-552 2277). From Dec 27; Manchester and Glasgow branches Dec 28.
Reductions from 25 per cent.

☐ **Episode**
172 Regent Street, W1 (0171-439 3561) and branches nationwide (0171-589 4279). Sale now on.
Leather jacket from £499 to £349; leather skirts from £199 to £139; 100 per cent wool coats from £299 to £209.

☐ **French Connection**
249 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-580 2507). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

☐ **Gianni Versace**
34-35 Old Bond Street, W1 (0171-499 1862); Italian Centre, Glasgow (0141-552 6510). From Jan 8.
Thirty per cent off selected stock.

☐ **Hennes**
261-271 Regent Street, W1 (0171-493 4004). Other branches: Brent Cross, Marble Arch, Kingston upon Thames, Harrow, Croydon, Watford, Wimbledon and nationwide. Inquiries: 0171-255 2031. Sale now on.
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... from designer labels to tables. When push comes to shove, **Caroline Griffiths** has an eye for the best buys

DAVID JUNIPER

☐ **Jaeger**
200-206 Regent Street, W1 (0171-200 4000). 100 stores nationwide, general inquiries (0171-200 4211). From Dec 27.
Discounts from 17-55 per cent. Camel cashmere stole from £169 to £99; suede gloves with zebra cuffs from £49 to £24.50; Jaeger London wool mix coat from £350 to £249; Jaeger London brown belted jacket from £320 to £219; brown wide-leg trousers from £140 to £89.

☐ **Karen Millen**
Branches nationwide (01622 664032). From today.
Up to 50 per cent off a range of classic jackets, tops and bodies; 30 per cent off selected jumpers and belts.

☐ **Kingshill Mail Order**
For copies of the Kingshill British Designer Collections catalogue and the Diffusion catalogue (£11 or £10 for a subscription, which is refunded if you place an order) call 01494 890555, or fax 01494 866003. Sale now on.
From now, 30 per cent off all designer styles in both catalogues; from Jan 2 until Jan 20, the reductions will increase to 50 per cent and will also include a selection of items from the Christmas catalogue.

☐ **Kookai**
123 Kensington High Street, W8; 25 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-937 4411. From Dec 27.
Up to 30 per cent discount on selected items.

☐ **Lillywhites**
24-36 Regent Street, SW1 (0171-915 4000). Eight branches nationwide. From Dec 27.
Discounts on many lines at 25-50 per cent off.

☐ **Marks & Spencer**
Marble Arch, Oxford Street, W1 (0171-935 7954); 286 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-935 4422. From Dec 27. Moorgate branch not included.
End of season clearance.

☐ **Miss Selfridge**
Branches nationwide (0181-910 1359). From Dec 27.
Up to 55 per cent off selected jackets, ponteroma jacket was £55, sale price £25; £10 off tailored trousers; half-price selected coloured suede trousers, now £40; 40 per cent off selected coloured suede safari-style jackets; velour side-split skirts were £35, sale price £15; half-price quilted jackets, fur-collar parkas were £40, sale price £20.

☐ **Monsoon**
Branches nationwide (0171-313 3000). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off autumn/winter collection: Josephine floral print long dress from £70 to £34.97; Aran cardigans from £60 to £34.95; beaded trim twinsets from £39.95 to £24.95; velvet evening dress from £85 to £55.

☐ **Mulberry**
41-42 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-491 4323); 185 Brompton Road, SW1 (0171-225 0313); 23-25 Swinegate, York (01904 611055). From Dec 27-Jan 11.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

☐ **Next**
Three hundred branches nationwide. Inquiries 0116-284 9424. From Dec 27 for two weeks.
Up to 50 per cent off most items.

☐ **Nougat**
Nougat at Fenwicks, Brent Cross Shopping Centre (0181-202 8200); House of Fraser, Metro Centre, Gateshead (0191-493 2424); Binns of Middlesbrough (01642 246371); Guilty by Design, Edinburgh (0131-447 8187); Great Clothes Ltd, Leeds (0113-235 0800) and Jill Black, Barton Arcade, Manchester (0161-834 5160). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items, including angora sweaters, shantung silk shirts and suits, shift dresses and belted jackets.

☐ **Oasis**
292 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-452 1000). From today until end Jan.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items. Tan suede jacket from £109.99 to £69.99; black leather jeans from £129.99 to £69.99; small leather dispatch bag from £45.99 to £22.99; red crepe suit jacket was £89.99, sale price £59.99.

☐ **Paul Smith**
40-44 Floral Street, WC2; 10 Byard Lane, Nottingham (0115-250 6712); 66-68 Bridge Street, Manchester (0161-831 9111). Inquiries 0171-379 7133. Paul Smith Jeans, 9-11 Langley Court, WC2. From Jan 10 at London branches and Nottingham. From Jan 4 at Manchester.
Discounts up to 30 per cent for three weeks.

☐ **Prada**
43 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-235 0008). From Dec 27.
Up to 30 per cent off autumn/winter collections.

☐ **Ravel**
184-188 Oxford Street, W1 (0171-436 3126) and branches nationwide (0171-631 0224). Sale now on.
From 25 to 40 per cent reductions. Suede loafers with snaffle were £29.99, sale price £20; high-heeled satin sandals were £49.99, sale price £29; grey beaded satin high-heeled court shoes were £39.99, sale price £29.

☐ **Reiss**
The Reiss Building, 114 King's Road, SW3; 116 Long Acre, WC2; 245 Regent's Street, W1; and branches in Leeds, Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow (0171-225 4900). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off a selection of items.

☐ **River Island**
Branches nationwide (0181-998 8822). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off a selection of items.

☐ **Russell & Bromley**
24-25 New Bond Street, London W1; 41 branches nationwide. Inquiries (0171-629 6903). From Dec 20.
Discounts from 30-50 per cent until mid-January.

☐ **Simpson Piccadilly**
203 Piccadilly, W1. Customer inquiries (0800 288188). From Dec 27-Jan 25.
Half-price collection includes Mondi, Amanda Wakeley, Louis Feraud, Louise Kennedy, Synonyme and Antonette. Up to 50 per cent off YSL Variation, Guy Laroche, Paul Costelloe, Fink, Simpson Collection, Betty Barclay, Pringle, Geiger. Weekend by Maxmara and Four Seasons. In addition there will be an extra 10 per cent off on Dec 27, 9-10am, and all day Dec 29.

☐ **Tie Rack**
487 Oxford Street, W1; 49 Regent Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0181-230 2333). From today (London stores) and Dec 27 (nationwide) until Jan 26.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

☐ **Timberland**
72 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-495 2139). Inquiries (0345 669988). From Dec 27.
Up to 25 per cent discount.

☐ **Wallis**
217 Oxford Street, W1, and branches nationwide (0181-910 1333). Sale now on.
Up to 50 per cent off selected items.

☐ **Warehouse**
19-21 Argyll Street, W1 (0171-437 7101); 75 branches nationwide, inquiries 0171-278 3491. From Dec 27.
Discounts of up to half-price on party wear, tailoring and jewellery.

☐ **Watches of Switzerland**
16 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-493 5916); branches nationwide (0171-931 7171). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off a wide range of famous Swiss watches including Tag Heuer, Omega, Breitling, Longines and Ebel. Men's bi-colour Omega bracelet watch was £995, sale price £497; men's steel and yellow metal Breitling Chronological was £2,365, sale price £1,773.75; ladies' titanium Conquest bracelet watch was £695, sale price £347.

☐ **Whistles**
12-14 St Christopher's Place, W1, and branches nationwide (0171-487 4484). From Dec 27.
From 25 to 50 per cent off selected items.

HOMES

☐ **The Conran Shop**
Michelin House, 81 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-589 7401). From Jan 4 for two weeks or while stocks last.
Reductions of 30 per cent on ex-display upholstery and furniture. Generous reductions on discontinued ranges throughout the shop. Bargains in damaged goods and samples.

☐ **David Mellor**
4 Sloane Square, SW1 (0171-730 4259). From Jan 4-18.
Ten per cent discount on all standard merchandise, 20 per cent discount on most ranges of David Mellor cutlery and up to 90 per cent discount on slightly damaged or shop-soiled merchandise.

☐ **Designers Guild Store**
267 King's Road, SW3 (0171-243 7300). From Jan 11-25.
Discounts on fabric, upholstery, bedlinen, wallpaper, tableware and accessories.

☐ **Designers Guild Warehouse**
6 Relay Road, Ariel Way off Wood Lane, W12. From Jan 18-26. (Sale hotline: 0171-243 7343.)
Only fabric and wallpaper are available at the Warehouse.

☐ **Divertimenti**
45-47 Wigmore Street, W1 (0171-935 0689); 39-41 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 8065). From Jan 11-25.
Fifty per cent discount on Quimper traditional hand-painted Breton china and 40 per cent off Pilluvuit Whiteware. Also bargains on slight seconds.

☐ **General Trading Company**
144 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-730 0411); 10 Argyle Street, Bath (01225 461507); 2-4 Dyer Street, Cirencester (01285 652314). From Jan 4-25.
Reductions of up to 50 per cent on merchandise throughout shop, including San Marco range of Italian ceramics.

☐ **Graham & Green**
4, 7 and 10 Elgin Crescent, W11 (0171-727 4594). From Jan 3-31.
Wrought-iron three-seater sofa complete with cushions reduced from £1,337 to half-price, and a Dutch pine wardrobe reduced by £300 to £465; 25 per cent off all kilims, rugs and runners; 20 per cent off Davenport china seconds.

☐ **Habitat**
Forty stores nationwide (0645 334433). From Dec 27.
Furniture: 50 per cent saving on metal/Formica-topped folding regatta table in blue and up to 30 per cent off sofas made to order in any fabric; 30 per cent off Border bedlinen and 20 per cent off Matarang 5ft metal bed. Kitchenware: 50 per cent off Fruit Garden embossed dinnerware range and 50 per cent off Somerset glassware range.

☐ ***Heal's***
196 Tottenham Court Road, W1; 234 King's Road, SW3; Tunsgate, Guildford, Surrey (0171-636 1666). From Dec 27-Jan 19.
Reductions in all departments with up to 20 per cent off most normal stock dining tables, chairs, occasional tables and upholstery; 30 per cent off selected cookware, canteens of cutlery and clear glass vases; 50 per cent off discontinued linens and all basketware at Tottenham Court Road.

☐ **The Holding Company**
243-245 King's Road, SW3 (0171-352 1600; mail order 0171-610 9160). From Dec 27-Jan 11.
Ten per cent off all chrome racking and Alpha shelving systems; 20 per cent off all canvas storage products, fabric-covered boxes and children's plastic storage items.

☐ **Jane Churchill**
151 Sloane Street, SW1 (0171-730 9847); Liberty, Regent Street, W1 (0171-734 1234); 3A Christopher Place, St Albans, Hertfordshire (01727 860293); 13 Fitzroy Street, Cambridge (01223 323211). From Dec 27 in Liberty and from Dec 28 in other stores.
Twenty-five per cent off selected imperfect fabrics and wallpapers, 30 per cent off selected bedlinen, reductions on all upholstered furniture orders and up to 50 per cent off selected decorative accessories, ceramics, lighting, lampshades, glassware and gift items.

☐ **Jerrys Home Store**
163 Fulham Road, SW3 (0171-581 0909); 57 Heath Street, Hampstead, NW3 (0171-794 8622); The Bentall Centre, Kingston upon Thames, southwest London (0181-549 5393); Home on Four, Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge, SW1 (0171-245 6251). From Dec 27 (today in Kingston). Smart Buys start on Jan 8 until end Feb.
Fifty per cent off selected items including linen throws from £75 to £37.50 and one third off other items such as Signum Swedish stainless steel cutlery and selected kitchen gadgets.

☐ **Paperchase**
213 Tottenham Court Road, W1, plus 11 other shops nationwide; for nearest branch: 0171-580 8496. From Dec 27 to end Jan.
One third off selected Christmas stock. Also knockdown prices on some summer furniture lines, including chairs, candlesticks, vases, stacking boxes and rugs. Large seagrass woven rug is reduced to £5.

☐ **The Pier**
Stores nationwide; for nearest branch: 0171-637 7001. From Dec 27-Jan 19.
Price reductions range from 20 to 50 per cent, including Shaker dining chair in green reduced from £75 to £59. Savannah wicker furniture 20 per cent off and Ticking Stripe blue and white porcelain 25 per cent off.

☐ **Purves & Purves**
80-81 and 83 Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-580 8223). From Dec 28-Jan 22.
Up to 40 per cent off ex-display furniture, 10 per cent off any single item over £500 and 50 per cent off discontinued lines of accessories.

☐ **The Source**
26-40 Kensington High Street, W8 (0171-938 2626); Lakeside Retail Park, West Thurrock, Essex (01708 890253); 10 Harbour Parade, Southampton (01703 336141). From Dec 27.
Up to 50 per cent off selected lines. Egyptian cotton duvet set from £19.95 to £9.95; Ashma bedspread from £35.95 to £17.95; double patchwork quilts were £79.95, sale price £39.95; single patchwork quilts were £69.95, sale price £34.95; Horrocks bath sheets were £10.50, sale price £8.40; Horrocks hand towels were £3.50, sale price £2.80.

☐ **White House**
51 New Bond Street, W1 (0171-629 3521). Dec 29 preview; sale Jan 2 for two weeks.
Fifteen per cent off all stock in all departments; 20 per cent off women's fashions with some merchandise reduced by up to 50 per cent.

PARIS

If you are considering taking advantage of the Eurostar £69 day-return to Paris (which begins today and runs to January 10) to brave the French sales this year, bear in mind that the Parisian shopper is a determined and occasionally vicious opponent who, when in pursuit of a bargain, will permit neither man, woman nor child to stand in her way. In order to avoid massively long queues and the unbelievably sharp Parisian elbow, it is therefore worth trying to get an invitation to the "soldes privés", the private sales to which press and valued customers are invited and which take place a day or two before the general sale. Call the shop in advance to check on the date of private sales.

Traditionally the Paris sales begin just after the new year, but some shops now start reducing prices before Christmas, while others are determined to squeeze the full price out of their customers until the very last week of January.

Here is a quick guide to some of the most sought-after Paris sales:

☐ **Galeries Lafayette**
40 Boulevard Haussmann, 75009 (42 82 34 56). From today.

☐ **Printemps**
64 Boulevard Haussmann, 75009 (42 85 86 87). From Jan 2.
"Les grands magasins" provide easy one-stop shopping with an excellent selection of designer fashion for men and women, plus household items such as bedlinen and towels. The sale at Galeries Lafayette has reductions up to 30 per cent. The sale at Printemps promises reductions on men and women's clothing and household items ranging from 30-40 per cent.

☐ **Le Bon Marché**
22 Rue du Sèvres, 75007 (44 39 80 00). From Jan 2-18.
Prices at the elegant Left Bank department store will be marked down by up to 50 per cent on selected items.

☐ **Hermès**
24 Faubourg St Honoré, 75008 (40 17 47 17). From Jan 20.
If you are prepared to queue, the coveted Hermès silk scarf can be snatched up at half-price during the sale.

☐ **Chantal Thomass**
1 Rue Vivienne, 75001 (45 44 07 52). From Jan 2.
Beautiful silk lingerie reduced by up to 50 per cent.

☐ **Bonpoint**
65 Rue de l'Université, 75007; 15 Rue Royale, 75008 (47 05 09 09). From Jan 7.
Chic children's shop and the home of traditional smocked dresses for girls and sailor suits for boys; reductions from 30-50 per cent.

☐ **Maud Frizon**
83 Rue des Saints-Pères, 75006 (42 22 06 93). Sale now on.
The price tags on Maud Frizon's beautiful hand-made shoes have been reduced by 30 per cent.

☐ **Christian Dior**
30 Avenue Montaigne, 75008 (40 73 54 44). From Jan 6.

☐ **Nina Ricci**
39 Avenue Montaigne, 75008 (49 52 59 66). From Jan 3.
Designer items at vastly reduced prices. Both shops offer up to 50 per cent reductions.

● *Information correct at time of going to press. Dates and reductions may change at short notice. Please check with specific shops before making a special trip.*

● *Additional research by Alex Wijeratne and Susan Bell.*

SHARPS bedrooms

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CAMBERLEY (Homebase) 01276 681561
CANTERBURY (Allied Carpets) 01227 788024
CHELMSFORD (Allied Carpets) 01245 365321
CHELMSFORD (Texas) 01245 280900
CRAWLEY (Homebase) 01293 538329
DORKING 01306 740088
EASTBOURNE 01323 470346
EPSOM 01372 744358
FARNHAM 01252 733445
GRAVESEND 01474 353801
GUILDFORD 01483 572121
GUILDFORD (Homebase) 01483 304300
HARLOW (Homebase) 01279 413293
HATFIELD (Homebase) 01707 270820
HEMEL HEMPSTEAD (Homebase) 01442 66552
HITCHIN 01462 435549
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LUTON (Homebase) 01582 561345
MAIDSTONE (Homebase) 01622 700974
ORPINGTON 01689 837724
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READING (Great Mills) 01734 455448
READING (Homebase) 01734 589980
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CAMBRIDGE 01223 350633
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COLCHESTER St Andrews Way (Homebase) 01206 861821
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NORWICH 01603 633955
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BOURNEMOUTH Winton 01202 529374
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CHICHESTER (Homebase) 01243 530936
FAREHAM 01489 581630
HIGH WYCOMBE 01494 472619
HOVE (Homebase) 01273 733966
POOLE (Great Mills) 01202 718327
PORTSMOUTH (Homebase) 01705 200340
SOUTHAMPTON (Great Mills) 01489 788763
SOUTHAMPTON (Homebase) 01703 510198
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WALSALL 01922 35057
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Leaning stones of Avebury fenced off to protect public

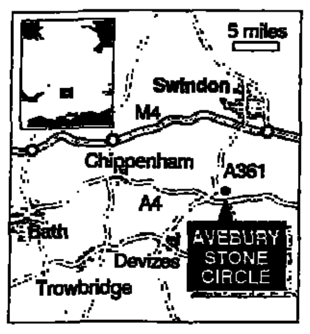
By Robin Young

TWO of the boulders in the neolithic stone circle at Avebury in Wiltshire have been fenced off for fear that they might topple over and flatten some unwary tourist.

The National Trust, which owns the site, the largest such circle in Europe, is holding talks with English Heritage and structural engineers to find a way of ensuring that the 20-tonne stones, a pair in Avebury's Northern Inner Circle jointly known as The Cove, are safe. It is feared that the number of visitors to Avebury, now approaching 500,000 a year, has so eroded the stones' surrounds that their stability is threatened.

The Cove is close to Avebury's pub, the Red Lion, whose landlord, Pat McCann, said: "From our point of view it is a good thing that the National Trust are taking proper precautions."

Some of the original stones have been removed, for building purposes or other reasons, in past centuries and on at least one occasion someone has been killed by one which fell. When a stone was lifted during archaeological excavations at the site earlier this century, the diggers found the remains of a 14th century hairdresser underneath.



The man, whose date and occupation were deduced from the coins and belongings in his pockets, was carrying what remain Europe's oldest known pair of scissors, now on display in the Avebury museum. It is supposed the man had been helping fellow villagers in an attempt to move or re-erect the stone when it fell on top of him.

Other giant stones in the 5,000-year-old Avebury complex are known to have fallen without warning. In 1713 the third stone in The Cove collapsed; a stone in the West Kennet Avenue fell in 1889; and one of the two Longstones tumbled in 1911. On none of those occasions was anyone hurt.

Experts became concerned last week about the two stones, which have now been fenced off, after studying antiquaries' drawings made by William Stukeley, an amateur archaeologist in the 1720s. It appeared that the angle at which both the huge, coffin-shaped blocks were leaning had increased noticeably since Stukeley's drawings were done.

Chris Gingell, the archaeologist who manages the site for the National Trust, said: "The present measures have been prompted by the possible threat posed by the stones to the safety of the public. We simply do not know if these stones are about to fall, but we cannot take any risk."

Mr Gingell said the stones leant "quite remarkably" and that the angle was more acute now than in a range of drawings and photographs made in the past 100 years. Engineers believe that Avebury's stability may have been disturbed over the centuries by building and demolition work around the stones, whose circular pattern passes through the village of Avebury itself. Unofficial excavations and treasure-hunting may also have played a part.

It is thought that most of the movement in the tall stones has taken place over the present century. Mr Gingell said that, for the present, secure fencing would keep the public at a safe distance from The Cove, but he did not know what measures might be taken in the long term. The possibilities include setting the stones in concrete, a method used at the site earlier this century by the archaeologist Alexander Keiller.

Dr Kate Fielden, secretary of the Avebury Society, said yesterday: "It is a good thing the Trust has spotted this in time. If it is the case that these stones are dangerous, then something has to be done."

The National Trust this year paid £15,000 to have the stones in the West Kennet Avenue cleaned after they were daubed with pagan symbols.

ENGLISH HERITAGE

It is feared that the increase in tourism at Avebury is so eroding the surrounds that the stones' stability is threatened

Youth dies after night of drinking with friend

By Robin Young

POLICE were awaiting the result yesterday of a post-mortem examination on a 17-year-old schoolboy who collapsed and died after drinking beer with friends.

Christian Devon was driven home by a friend's father after complaining that he felt sick. He collapsed after arriving at his family's home in Whitley, near Melksham, Wiltshire, early on Monday morning.

He had gone drinking with his friend, Ian Tucker, in Melksham on Sunday, but was driven home after being sick in the town centre and complaining of a sore throat. When he arrived home he collapsed in front of his parents. His father, James Devon, 46, dialled 999 while Mrs Devon attempted mouth-to-mouth resuscitation.

Yesterday Wiltshire police said a post-mortem examination would be held. "It is a mystery why such a young, healthy lad should have died so suddenly."

Christian had been studying for an A level in mathematics and a GNVQ in business studies at George Ward school, Melksham.

Forsyth orders report into sixth suicide at jail

By Richard Ford, Home Correspondent

MICHAEL FORSYTH yesterday demanded a full report into the sixth suicide by a prisoner in 15 months at a highly criticised women's jail in Scotland.

Yvonne Gilmour, 22, was found dead in her cell at Cornton Vale prison in Stirling, where she was serving a three-month sentence for assault, shoplifting and breach of the peace. The prison has been at the centre of controversy since a highly critical report, published earlier this year, condemned conditions for inmates.

The body of Miss Gilmour, from Glasgow, was found in her cell at 11pm on Christmas Eve. Prison staff are treating her death as suicide. As Labour and Liberal Democrat politicians demanded action to deal with problems at the prison, the Scottish Secretary said he had asked for a full report into the incident from the chief executive of the Scottish Prison Service. Mr Forsyth added: "There will be a fatal accident inquiry and I will be inviting the chief executive to discuss with myself and the prisons minister the situation at Cornton Vale."

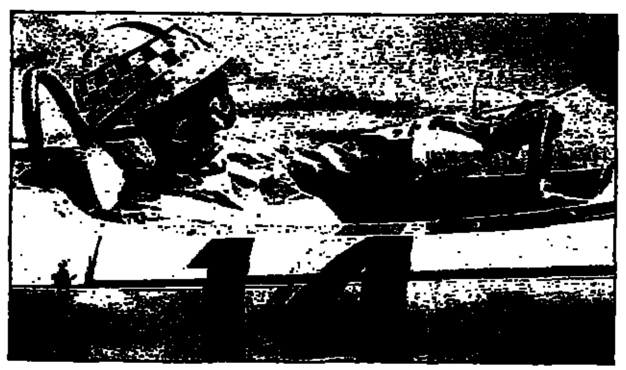
Kate Donegan, a former deputy inspector of prisons in Scotland, became governor of the prison four months ago. She was co-author of the highly critical report by the Scottish prisons inspectorate on Cornton Vale. Her appointment followed the publication earlier in the year of the report by the Chief Inspector of Prisons in Scotland. The report said staff had struggled to deal with an influx of prisoners with drug problems. It highlighted conditions in the remand wing of the jail where threequarters of the women were on medical or suicide observation. The proportion had at times been as high as 93 per cent.

Clive Fairweather, the chief inspector, wrote of life on the remand wing: "The conditions in this wing were not unlike a mixture between a casualty clearing station and a psychiatric ward. Many [inmates] were frail and undernourished. They were a pathetic, demoralised and inadequate group of women to see and talk to."

His report found that the total number of medical prescriptions for the prison, designed to hold 220 women, was 2,670 in October 1993, 3,198 a year later and 5,528 in October last year.

Among the 25 recommendations in his report Mr Fairweather called for more use of community service orders to cut the number of women arriving at Cornton Vale with drug problems.

The Scottish Prison Service said that much improvement had been made at Cornton Vale to make life for inmates better and help those with drug problems. A spokesman said moves were in place to improve the management structure at Cornton Vale and a clear plan was now being developed.



Innes Ireland wearing a helmet included in the sale

Sale of gems from motorsport's magpie

MOST racing drivers collect mementoes as they travel around the world but rarely as compulsively as the late Innes Ireland. The driver was a magpie about his sport, keeping thousands of photographs, letters, racing overalls and helmets, and even pictures of some of his spectacular crashes.

His archive, including the personal photograph album of Mike Hawthorn, Britain's first world champion, will be sold by his family in February at Sotheby's in London.

Hawthorn's photographs came into Ireland's possession through his third wife, Jean Howarth, who was engaged to Hawthorn when he was killed in a car crash. Ireland died of cancer in 1993, aged 63. When he retired from racing in 1967 one of the first to wish him well was Roy John James, the Great Train robber and amateur racing driver who was in Parkhurst prison on the Isle of Wight. The elegant script says: "Innes, may I say how sorry I am to read of your retirement from racing and in my opinion it should be the other way about, racing needs more like you. With the very best of luck — though it's not half as exciting."

The archive includes personal photographs of his friend Graham Hill and a cartoon Christmas card from the Hills showing Graham dressed as Santa but with the London Rowing Club colours around his hat. There are also cards signed by Fangio and Bruce McLaren.

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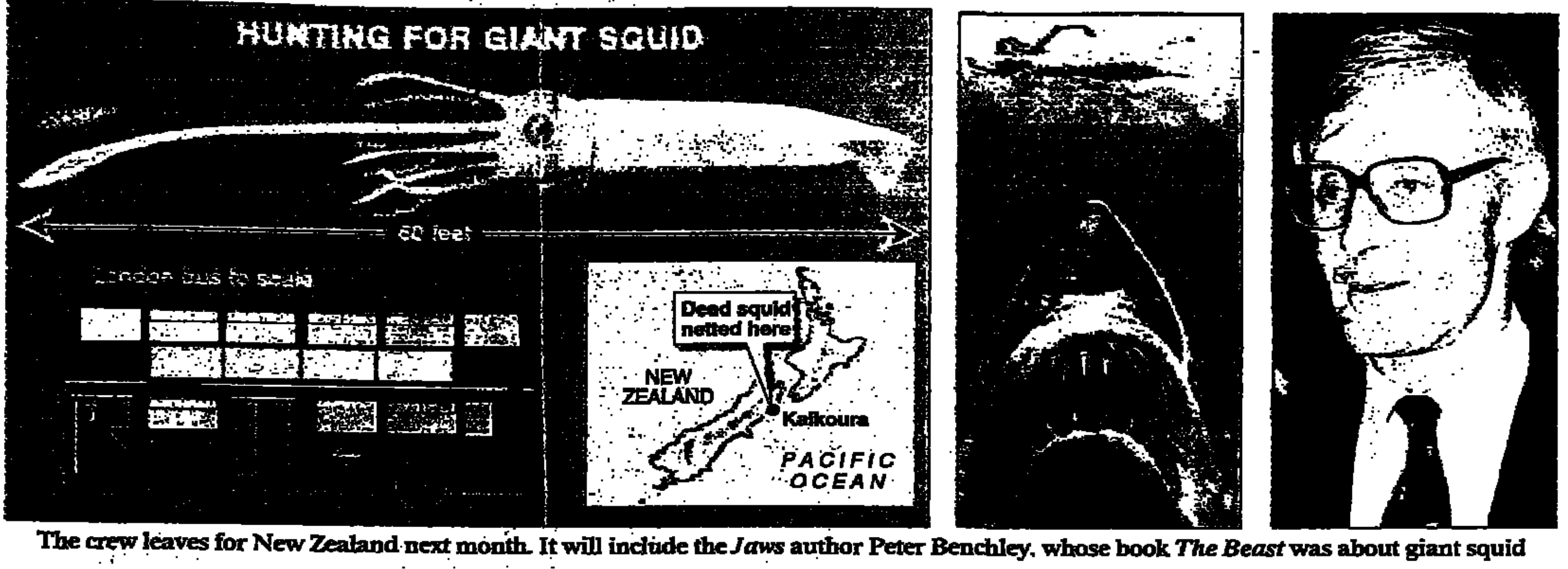
Camera crew hunts last great secret of the deep



The crew leaves for New Zealand next month. It will include the *Jaws* author Peter Benchley, whose book *The Beast* was about giant squid

A modern Captain Ahab pursues his obsession to its lair

By Nigel Hawkes
Science Editor

NEXT month a camera lowered into the deep waters off the South Island of New Zealand may at last track the giant squid to its lair.

Up to 60ft long, with a complex brain, eyes as big as dinner plates and a powerful parrot-like beak, the giant squid is the largest unknown animal on Earth. Although more than 100 of the creatures have washed up on beaches, or been caught in fishermen's nets, nobody has ever seen one alive in its natural setting, 3,000 feet below the surface of the ocean.

"It's a staggering phenomenon that this big animal exists and we don't know much about it," said Dr Clyde Roper, of the Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History in Washington. Dr Roper is the leader of the expedition and the Captain Ahab of the giant squid, pursuing it without success for many years.

He hoped originally to raise enough money to hire a submersible and plunge down in pursuit of the giant squid, or *Architeuthis*, but eventually had to settle for a cheaper option, lowering a robotically controlled camera in an attempt to capture at least a glimpse of the creature. If this proves a success, a second expedition may follow in 1998, with a submersible. The search site, off Kaikoura, has been chosen because several giant squid have been netted there in recent years and it is a favourite area for sperm whales, which live on squid.

Dr Roper said more was known about long-extinct dinosaurs than about giant squid. Nobody knew how they behaved, how and what they hunted, how they reproduced, or even which way up — head up or head down — they hung in the water. The giant squid has been a staple of fiction since the days of Homer, whose description of the sea monster Scylla, in *The Odyssey*, may have been based on *Architeutis*, as may the mythical Scandinavian kraken, a sea monster believed to dwell off Norway.

In *Moby Dick*, Herman Melville portrayed "a vast pulpy mass ... innumerable long arms radiating from its centre, curling and twisting like a nest of anacondas, as if blindly to catch at any hapless object within reach".

The fascination has continued to the modern day, fed by ignorance. Peter Benchley, author of *Jaws*, turned to the giant squid in his 1991 book *The Beast*, now made into a television mini-series, the first part of which will be shown on ITV at 9pm tonight. Benchley will be part of Dr Roper's expedition, along with Emory Kristof, a photographer from *National Geographic* magazine, and Teddy Tucker, a monster enthusiast from Bermuda.

Until the end of the 18th century, any giant squid washed ashore were towed out to sea to be dumped, or were fed to dogs. Since then, scientists have been collecting speciments more systematically, not only from beaches and nets, but also from the stomachs of whales.

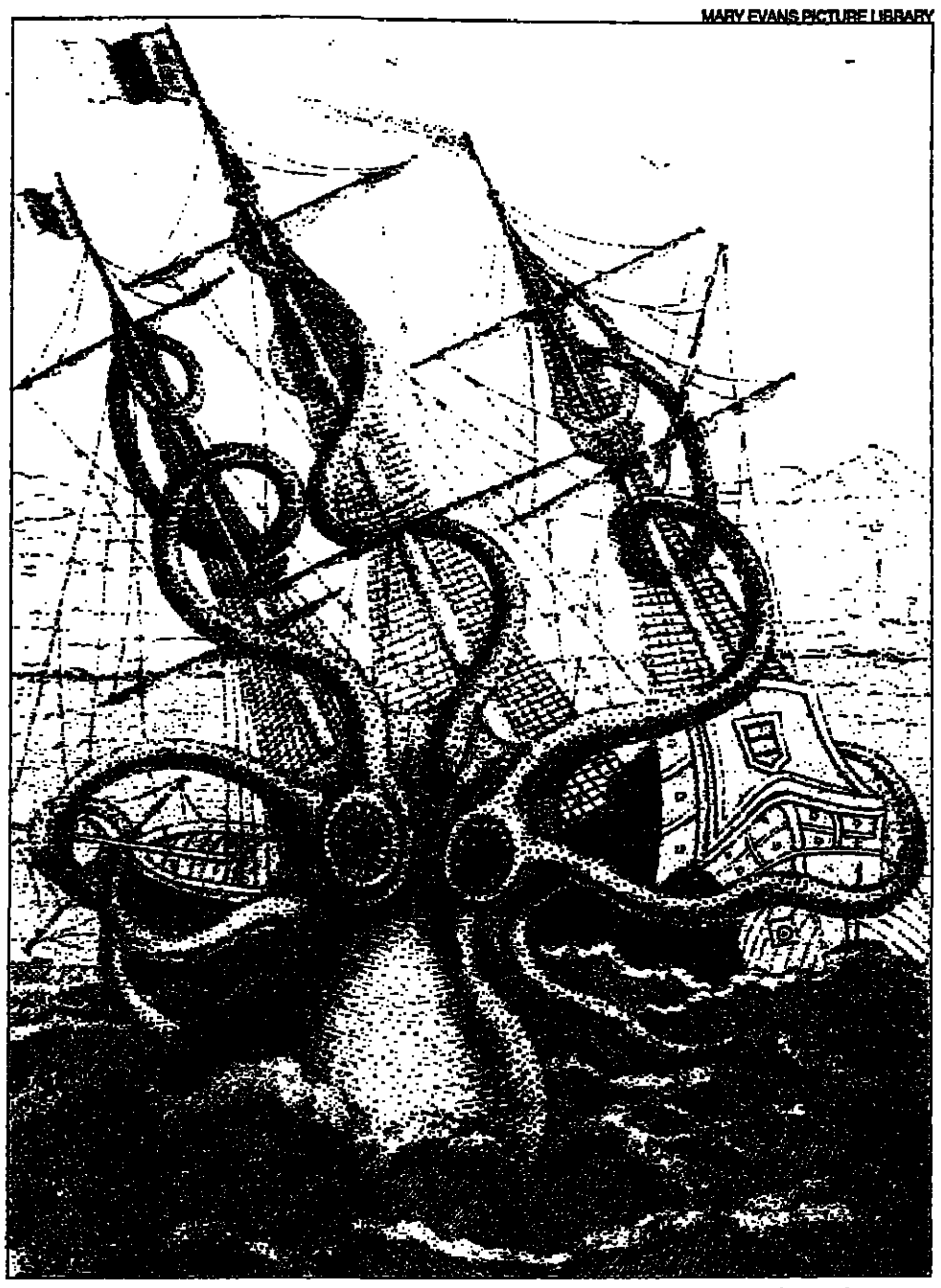
Virtually every sperm whale harpooned in the days of whaling was found to have sharp squid beaks in its stomach. Dr Roper estimated that a 50-ton sperm whale might eat three or four half-ton giant squid a day. If so, there must be many giant squid in the darkness, thousands of feet below the surface of the oceans.

How deep remains yet another squid mystery, but it will certainly be dark and, unlike many sea creatures, the giant squid does not glow. It may be attracted to the camera light and swim towards it, enabling the scientists to take a decent picture. If it stretches out a great arm loaded with suckers, so much the better.

If the expedition comes back with even a minute of film "it will be one of the greatest accomplishments of 20th-century marine biology," said Richard Ellis, author of *Monsters of the Sea*, who is now writing a book about giant squid.

Leading article, page 19

MARY EVANS PICTURE LIBRARY



Sea monsters have been staples of fiction for centuries, from the kraken, above, to Hollywood's interpretation of the hunt for *Moby Dick*, starring Gregory Peck

Kayleigh Ward: missing

Missing schoolgirl urged to call home

By Richard Ford

THE search for missing schoolgirl Kayleigh Ward will resume today. Kayleigh, aged nine, has not been seen since she left a hostel where she lived with her mother to buy some chips for a neighbour a week ago.

Detective Superintendent David Jones, leading the inquiry, said yesterday: "Quite honestly, I think somebody has her — not perhaps against her will. She may well be quite happy to be with them."

Police have scaled down their hunt for the "streetwise" child, who confidently chatted with vagrants and tramps in Chester city centre on Christmas Eve. Instead of a team of 170, a squad of 40 officers were involved in the search yesterday, concentrating on specific areas in response to information from the public.

Mr Jones appealed to anyone who might have Kayleigh to allow her to ring home and speak to her mother. Yvonne Ward, 36, spent Christmas Day at the hostel in Chester, the CD player she had planned to give her daughter unopened. She failed to raise the alarm over her daughter until Friday night in the mistaken belief that she had gone to stay with other members of the family in Chester. She said: "This is a nightmare. We just haven't slept, can't eat. But it's not her. She wouldn't do this to me."

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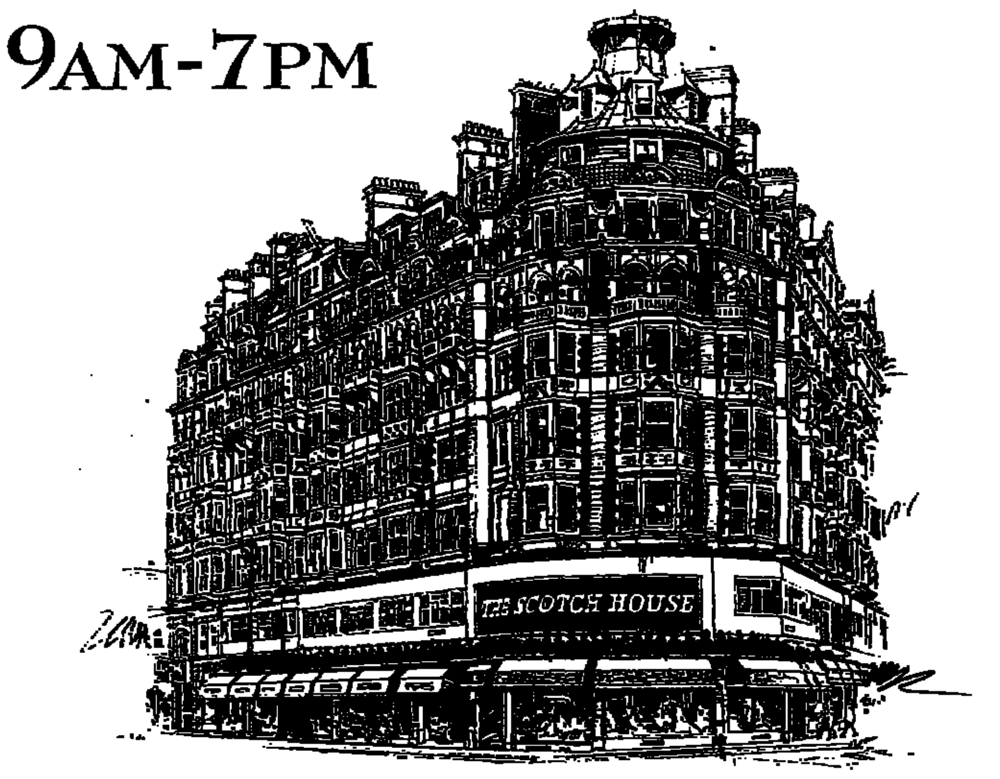

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هكذا في الأصل

The courage of children in hospital at Christmas

BY JOHN YOUNG

ESME FRANCIS, aged 16½ months, is spending her second Christmas at the Evelina children's hospital, being treated for a genetic kidney disorder. Both kidneys were removed when she was four months old because neither was functioning and her blood pressure was dangerously high.

She is now on dialysis awaiting a transplant, which is unlikely to take place for several months because of the risk of rejection at such an early stage. She cannot absorb food properly and is dependant on drugs and intravenous feeding.

Her parents, Beverley and Steven, of Isleworth, west London, spent last Christmas at the hospital, which is the paediatric wing of the Guy's and St Thomas's Hospital Trust in London. This year they had hoped to celebrate it at home. Despite having been twice readmitted with pneumonia and a chest infection, Esme appeared to be reasonably well until last Friday, when an ambulance was summoned. She was found to be suffering from bronchiolitis — a condition in which coughing brings on vomiting. "The family were all coming down from the North to stay for Christmas," Mrs Francis said. "But we've had to cancel it because we're too worried about her."

Two floors above, Thabassum Rahman is spending her first Christmas at the Evelina. Aged just over three months, she has already undergone two operations for a defective heart and was released from intensive care only 72 hours ago.

Normally the second operation would have been postponed until the age of six or seven months but it had to be brought forward because of other cardiac complications. However, the prognosis is encouraging.

Her parents, Ruji and Moshiur, originally from Bangladesh but now living in Manor Park, east London, are resigned to spending the holiday at the bedside of their first-born child.

Carol Williams, clinical nurse specialist at the Evelina, said: "It is more difficult to assess how much pain children are suffering, because in many cases they have never experienced serious pain before. They don't understand why they are in pain and can't always tell us how they feel. We have got to be very good at recognising symptoms."

The Evelina children's hospital treats some 110,000 children a year, either at Guy's or at "outreach" clinics throughout the southeast of England. It employs some 600 staff, among them some of the most highly skilled and motivated paediatric nurses in the world. The *Times* Christmas Appeal has so far raised more than £30,000, money urgently needed to pay for equipment and technical developments which do not attract National Health Service funding. At this special time of year we *thank* our readers for their generosity and invite many more contributions.

GILL ALLEN

Steven Francis with his daughter Esme, who is awaiting a kidney transplant at the Evelina children's hospital

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Family claims deportation is death warrant

BY BILL FROST

A CROAT family given refuge in Britain after their home was overrun by Serbs are to be deported on New Year's Day to face what they say will be almost certain death.

Vlatko Sokcevic joined a special forces unit during the siege of Vukovar in 1991. The bloody battle for the town, followed by a massacre of civilians, saw friends and relatives pitted against each other in an ethnically mixed corner of Eastern Slavonia.

Mr Sokcevic, a business studies graduate, settled with his wife and two daughters in Hungerford, Berkshire, four years ago. A petition submitted to the Home Office urging that the family be allowed to stay has been signed by almost 4,000 local people. However, Michael Howard, the Home Secretary, has refused them asylum. Home Office officials have told the family that their circumstances are not "sufficiently compassionate or compelling to justify allowing them to remain here".

Mr Sokcevic, his wife Evica and daughters Ivana, 11, and Tena, 4, fled the flames of Vukovar for the Croatian capital, Zagreb. They have since been joined by Mr Sokcevic's mother, Stefica, 64. Ivana said: "They spat at us in the street, called us 'dirty refugees'. It was horrible.

"Girls at school beat me. They seemed to hate us, even though we are all Croatian. Here in Hungerford we have been accepted and I have lots of friends. Tena and I do not just speak English, we think in English. Why do they want to send us to a place where we are not safe?"

Vukovar remains occupied by the Serbs. The surrounding area contains at least 100,000 landmines, according to the latest United Nations estimate.

Mrs Sokcevic, 35, said: "I am terrified at the prospect of going back. At very best, it is as if the Home Secretary cast us adrift in the ocean on a raft. In reality, though, it is much worse. Vlatko faces certain death; all the Serbs know he was with special forces trying to break the siege.

"He fought with the elite and that means he faces certain death. We all might, because this is not a war where people forgive and forget; men, women and even tiny children all pay the price."

Mr Sokcevic said: "There is a price on my head because I resisted. There is blood on my hands, but it was kill or be killed when the town fell and we fought street by street. I killed men I knew before they could kill me. But what alternative was there? What would Michael Howard have done to protect his family?

"Just before we fled I saw a Serb man, who had been a very close friend, in the window of a gutted house near our position. For a moment I forgot the war and remembered the good times. I waved to him and then saw he was taking aim at me. I fired first and he went down."

David Rendel, the Liberal Democrat MP for West Berkshire, who has taken a keen interest in the family's case, is angry and disappointed at the deportation order, appalled that they are to be sent home. "This is very sad news," he said. "Throwing them out when they have nowhere else to go, in this of all seasons, is an appalling way to treat a family."

Milosevic accused, page 15

The Sokcevic family, from left, Stefica, Tena, Evica, Vlatko and Ivana face deportation on January 1

Blinking badges cut through small talk

BY A STAFF REPORTER

ELECTRONIC ice-breakers could spark a social revolution in the next decade by overturning the traditions of the dating game. The devices, already being planned by the electronics group Philips, will allow strangers with similar interests, likes or dislikes, to spot each other instantly without wasting time on small talk.

Nicknamed "hot badges" and small enough to be disguised as a tie pin or brooch, they are short-range communicators which can be programmed with personal information. When one badge comes within range of another they "talk" electronically via radio messages. If the owners share enough similar interests their badges light up or bleep. However, matters are likely to be complicated as people programme their badges with false information or unusual sexual preferences.

Simon Turner, a Philips researcher, said: "There is nothing to stop us producing a crude type of hot badge now, and a useable version might be only three years away. I don't think it will detract from social skills, but it might change them and make us develop new ones."

Mormons prosper as pews and coffers fill

FROM GILES WHITTELL IN SALT LAKE CITY

AN ARCTIC wind off the Great Salt Lake was keeping pilgrims and the merely curious away from the Christmas lights in Temple Square, but in his sumptuous office upstairs nothing could dim the spirits of one of the world's 15 holiest Mormons.

"We will never, never, never give up," boomed Elder Jeffrey Holland, an "Apostle" of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints who believes he is a professional heir to Moses and St Paul.

Indeed, there seems little danger of the Mormons abandoning their drive to convert all souls, living and dead, to what they consider the only authentic form of Christianity. One hundred and fifty years after founding Salt Lake City, and a century after renouncing polygamy, their organisation remains vulnerable to ridicule. It is, however, bigger, richer and more powerful than ever.

Nestled in velvet on Elder Holland's desk is a tiny brass replica of the Book of Mormon. Two thirds of its leaves are bound shut, representing mythic pages yet to be revealed even to the faithful. The published third has been attacked by non-Mormons as a hoax, and the ancient gold tablets from which it is supposed to have been translated have been "lost". Yet this is the text that inspired the Mormons' trek over the Rockies in 1847 to the upland basin that Brigham Young declared their promised land, and it is now the basis of one of the world's fastest-growing creeds.

> ❛ The Mormons endured persecution before their epic trek and derision for their multiple wives after it ❜

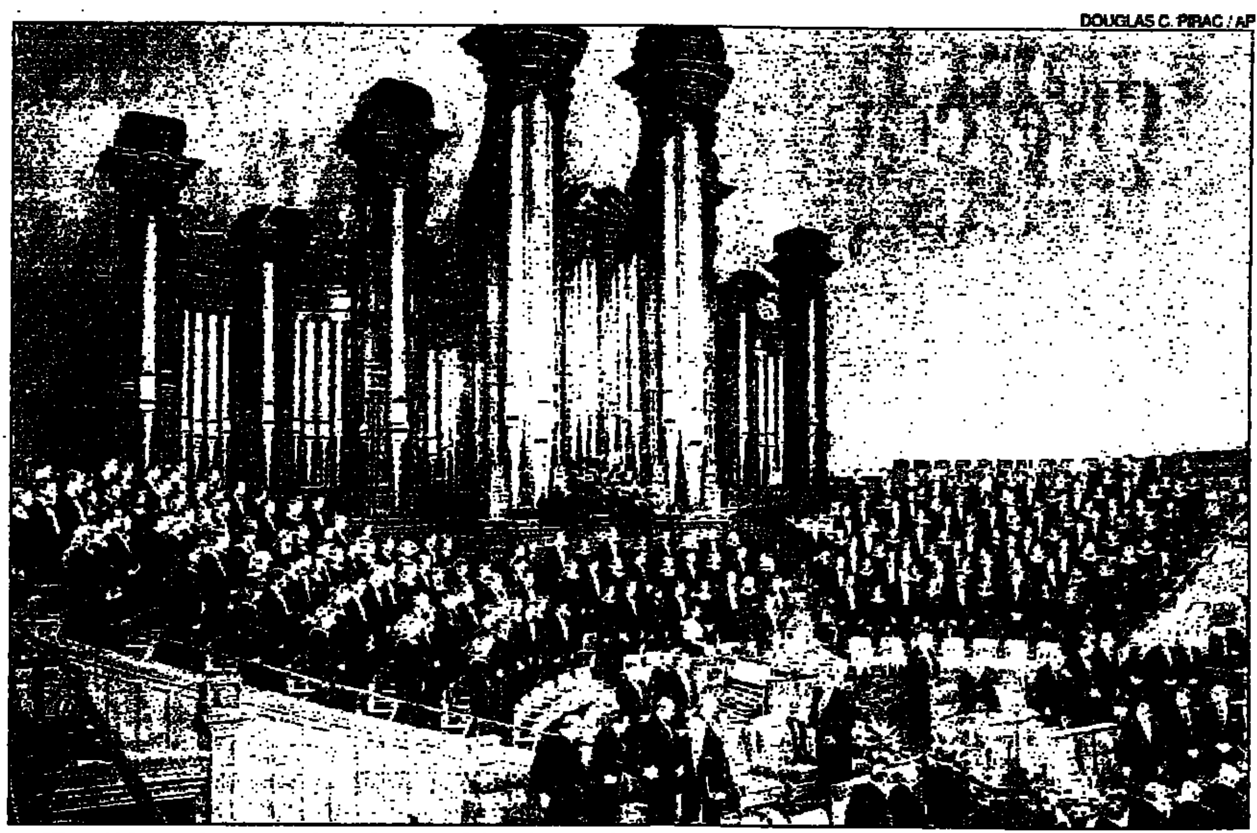
Best known for eschewing alcohol, tobacco and even coffee, the Mormons endured persecution before their trek and derision for their multiple wives after it. Nowadays they number nearly ten million worldwide, with business interests earning an estimated $8 billion (£4.8 billion) a year and a close-knit leadership intent on cultivating the image of a mainstream "family church".

"Our greatest challenge is managing our growth," said Elder Holland, a former missionary to London who is one of 12 male Apostles appointed for life to the sect's upper echelons. He would not discuss finances in detail, insisting that the Mormons' priority is winning souls to God. Nevertheless, prime Mormon property still dominates Salt Lake City's booming business district, while Mormon-owned television and radio stations thrive.

Even the missionary work performed by young Mormons in 159 countries is inherently profitable, since the missionaries travel at their own expense but converts tithe their pre-tax incomes to headquarters in Salt Lake City. As one Wall Street trader told *Time* magazine: "All they do there is breed, pray and make money."

Nowhere is this prosperity more evident than in the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, a former hotel opposite the Salt Lake City temple lavishly restored in time for the coming 150th anniversary celebrations. A ballroom has been converted as a chapel. On the tenth floor two teetotal restaurants give superb views over the temple's spires to the desert, while a shop in the basement does a roaring trade in video sermons. (Tithing forms are free.)

For all its opulence, the Church faces charges of hypocrisy and intolerance. Last month it was acutely embarrassed by the arrest and resignation of a 51-year-old Mormon talk-show host who preached family values over the air but admitted forcing a 15-year-old girl to have oral sex with him. Not since Joyce McKinney, a failed beauty queen, made headlines in 1978 by kidnapping the devout young Kirk Anderson for sex sessions in fur-lined manacles can a Latter-Day Saint have been so compromised.


DOUGLAS C. PIZAC / AP

The 166th two-day General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints gathers in Salt Lake City

Saints lose struggle to keep Salt Lake dry

BRUCE GARDNER, a lapsed Mormon, reached for another four-pint jug to fill with "Irish Wasatch Stout" and offered a weary analysis of drinking in what used to be the teetotal capital of the world (Giles Whittell writes in Salt Lake City).

"The biggest problem with drinkers here," he said from behind the taps in the Squatters Pub, not half a mile from the Salt Lake Tabernacle, "is that most are graduated Mormons and can't handle it. They end up getting pregnant or a social disease or into a fight."

He added swiftly that "overall, Mormons are really nice". But as Salt Lake City prepares to welcome the world for the 2002 Winter Olympics, they have lost their long battle to keep it dry.

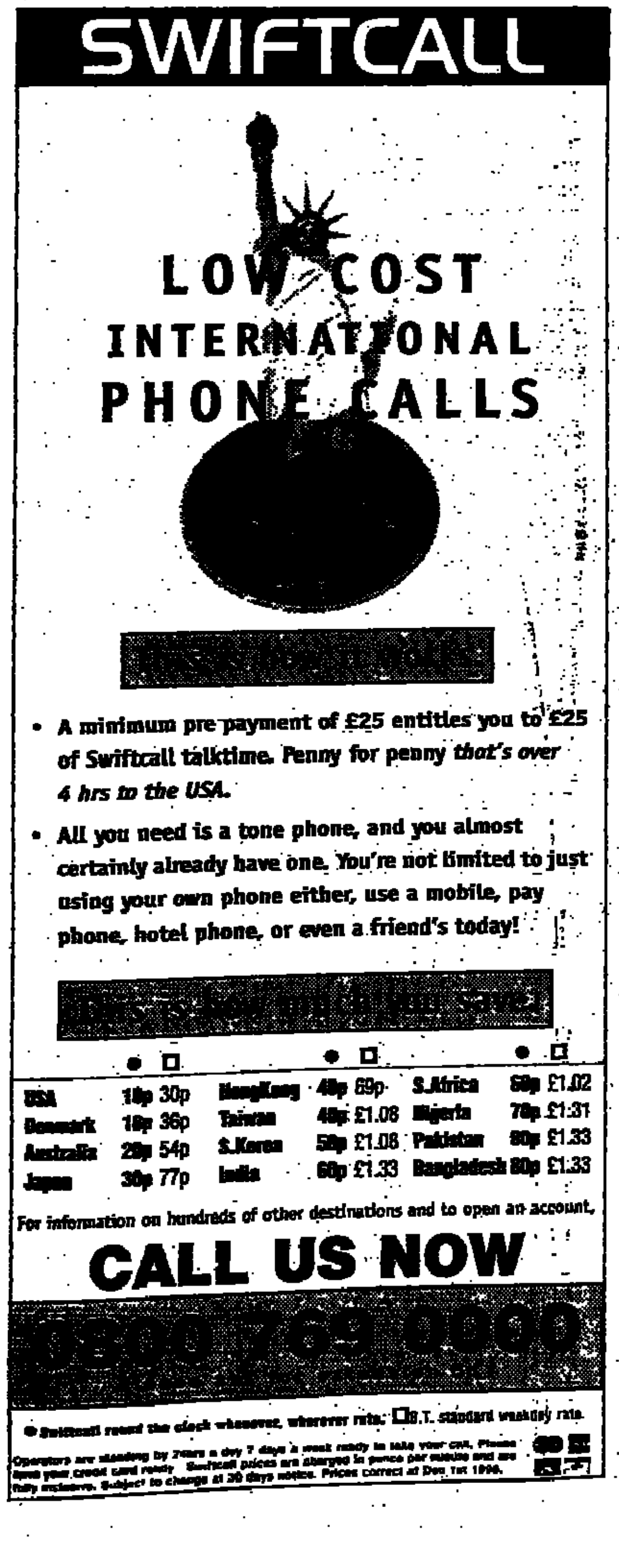
Until the late 1980s, in deference to Mormons' belief that the body is an extension of God's temple and should not be defiled by stimulants, even cocktail trolleys on airliners closed down as they passed through Utah airspace at 30,000ft. But despite resistance from Mormon elders, Salt Lake City's liquor laws have been so diluted in recent years that a good burgundy is not much harder to find than Temple Square.

Off-licences are run by the state with special taxes going towards school lunches and the treatment of alcoholism, but they stay open until 10pm, six nights a week. Bars are run as clubs, but "temporary membership" is free with "sponsorship" from a friendly local. Restaurants may now serve wine at the table instead of requiring customers to take their own.

"Our reaction is one of dismay, because we don't think alcohol is good for people," Elder Jeffrey Holland, of the Mormon Council of Apostles, said. "Our bodies are the temple of God, inseparably linked to the spirit to constitute the soul of man."

For the faithful, frozen tropical fruit drinks are available at the alcohol-free Garden Restaurant a few steps from the Salt Lake Temple. Jollier souls have a somewhat wider choice.

Rising Mormons: sketch of a temple for Preston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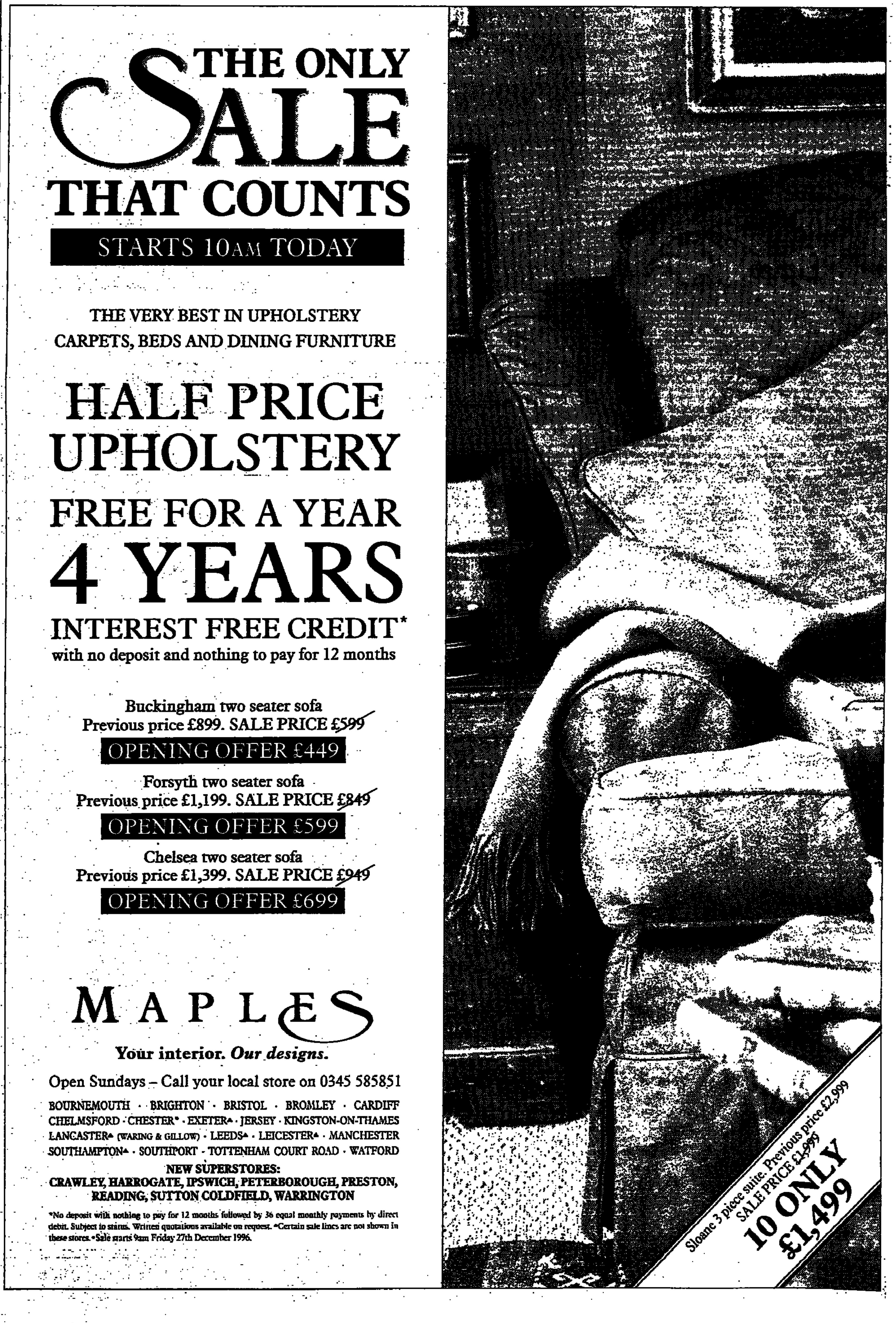
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Lima hostages pray as talks remain stalled

As the hostages tucked into sushi and wine, President Fujimori kept to his tough line, reports **Gabriella Gamini**

AT LEAST 105 hostages, still held inside the Japanese Ambassador's residence by heavily armed Tupac Amarú guerrillas, spent their Christmas praying around a handful of candles and eating *panetone* (Italian Christmas cake) and chocolate. They were heard singing carols and holding midnight Mass.

Their ordeal looks set to continue for days, however, as tense negotiations over their release remain deadlocked. Yesterday the hostages, mainly Peruvian government figures and Japanese businessmen, faced their ninth day in a building that has had no electricity or running water for days.

Red Cross workers wheeled 105 sushi and fried noodle meals and some bottles of wine into the besieged building as Christmas lunch for the hostages. Blurred television pictures showed the captives slumped on floors.

President Fujimori sent letters yesterday to Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, and the Pope, assuring them that he would find a peaceful solution to the hostage crisis. He has also repeatedly insisted, however, that he will not make deals with the terrorists.

President Yeltsin yesterday wrote to Señor Fujimori and called on the Group of Seven leading industrialised nations to join forces to help to resolve the hostage crisis. He suggested that a joint declaration of the Group of Eight (the G7, plus Russia) should offer "co-ordinated assistance in resolving the conflict, including the possible dispatch of anti-terrorist squads from national security services". However, several G7 members, including the United States, Britain and Germany, sent special forces to Lima last week.

The Tupac Amarú Revolutionary Movement (MRTA) rebels, who have explosives strapped to their bodies and appear to be ready to die for their cause, are not budging from their demand that hundreds of their comrades be freed from prison.

A diplomatic dispute with Uruguay has also flared, with Señor Fujimori angered by what he called an "outrageous hostage for prisoner swap" that appeared to have been brokered by the Uruguayan Government for the release of their Ambassador, Tabaré Bocalandro. Yesterday Señor Fujimori recalled his Ambassador from Montevideo. "It is despicable to give terrorists the idea that we are ready to make deals with them. Such impressions signify a setback in the crisis; I am not going to give in," he said.

The guerrillas released Señor Bocalandro at 6.30pm on Christmas Eve, only hours after a Uruguayan judge released two suspected Tupac Amarú rebels from a Montevideo prison. The two suspected terrorists, Luis Alberto Samaniego (alias El Negro) and Sonia Silvia Gora Rivera (alias Comrade Nancy), had been arrested by Interpol in Montevideo last December. They were accused of taking part in the kidnapping of a former Bolivian government minister, held for 56 days.

The rebels inside the ambassador's residence have also asked for improved prison conditions for their leaders held in isolation in underground cells. Their leader, Victor Polay Campos, arrested two years ago, is kept in a soundproof underground bunker in the port of Callao outside Lima, and has not seen anyone in months.

The demand suggested that the rebels could be open to a bargain. However, the release so far of hundreds of hostages is no sign that the rebels are giving in. They now have a much more manageable number of hostages and appear ready to hold out for weeks to come.

Harassment condemned

Tokyo: Ryutaro Hashimoto, the Japanese Prime Minister, condemned some of his countrymen yesterday for harassing Peruvian residents since the beginning of the Lima siege.

"It is a shame. No one must harass [Peruvian residents] when we are fighting terrorists," he told reporters.

Shops and cars owned by Peruvians in Isesaki, about 65 miles north of Tokyo, have been stoned. The Peruvian-Japanese community in the Isesaki area is perhaps the largest in Japan, accounting for about 4,000 of the 15,000 Peruvians in the country. No one has been injured in the incidents. *(Reuter).*

PILAR OLIVARES /REUTER

Eduardo Laos, freed on Saturday, prays with his son, Eduardito, for those still held

Clinton says 'no' to black English

FROM IAN BRODIE IN WASHINGTON

THE idea of recognising black English as a second language has been rejected by President Clinton.

With his backing, Richard Riley, the Education Secretary, announced that school boards would not be entitled to federal funds for bilingual education to support black English in their classrooms.

The announcement was a pre-emptive strike against the predominantly black city of Oakland, California, where the school board voted unanimously last week to recognise black English as a second language.

The board ordered its officials to devise and implement a programme to teach black students in "their primary language", black English, to maintain the legitimacy of the language and to help them to learn standard English.

The idea of treating black students who, for example, say "he bin" instead of he has been, as if they were speaking a foreign language, has provoked a political backlash across America and has divided black educators.

By joining the opponents, Mr Clinton may have upset blacks who voted for him, but he believes that supporting black English as a separate language can only stigmatise and hinder those who speak it.

Mr Riley said: "Elevating black English to the status of a language is not the way to raise standards of achievement in our schools and for our students."

Black English, or Ebonics — from ebony and phonics — is a non-standard form of English and not a foreign language, Mr Riley said. Schools using Ebonics would not qualify for federal bilingual funds that are provided to teach English to students who speak Spanish or 100 other languages as their primary tongue.

Oakland's school board had noted that academics had traced black English back through the descendants of slavery to its roots on the west coast of Africa.

It hoped that teachers recognising the speech patterns of black English will be better able to instruct black students in standard English.

Martin Luther King's killer will take secret to the grave

FROM JAMES BONE IN NEW YORK

A TRAUMATIC chapter of American history drew to a close yesterday as James Earl Ray, the convicted assassin of Martin Luther King, slipped into a coma without providing new details of his crime.

Civil rights activists had hoped for a dramatic deathbed confession confirming their long-held suspicions that Ray did not act alone in the 1968 murder, which sparked race riots across the United States.

However, Ray, 68, who was moved from prison last month to a hospital in Nashville, Tennessee, was said to be in the final stages of cirrhosis of the liver and was not expected to survive.

Ray, a white petty thief, was sentenced to 99 years' imprisonment for shooting King in Memphis, where the black leader had gone to support a strike of sanitation workers.

Police found a rifle and said it had been fired from a second-floor bathroom in a nearby hostel. Fingerprints on the weapon were identified as belonging to Ray, who was tracked to Atlanta, Toronto, London, Portugal and finally back to London, before being arrested by Scotland Yard detectives. Ray pleaded guilty to the killing and was sentenced without trial, but he quickly recanted and spent years in jail seeking a full court hearing. He claimed that he bought the rifle in an Alabama sports shop for the real killer, a mystery accomplice named "Raoul" whom he purportedly met in Montreal.

Civil rights activists have long believed that Ray was part of a wider plot, and urged him to repent before it was too late.

Ray's brother, Jerry, claimed the FBI was behind the plot against King. He said Ray's ashes would be scattered on the FBI building in Washington.

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Troops and settlers clash as hopes rise for Hebron pullout

FROM ROSS DUNN IN JERUSALEM

ISRAELI security forces clashed with Jewish settlers in Hebron yesterday during demonstrations against plans to hand most of the West Bank town over to Palestinian self-rule.

Soldiers and police scuffled with settlers in the streets and on rooftops as Israeli and Palestinian negotiators moved closer to an agreement over the future of the town. Under the proposed plan, Israeli troops would withdraw from 80 per cent of Hebron.

Noam Arnon, a spokesman for the Jewish settlers in Hebron, said yesterday that Israelis, including government ministers, were being kept in the dark about the dangers of the proposed accord.

"I think the people of Israel do not know the details of the agreement, even cabinet ministers," he said. "The details are very bad [for the security of Jewish settlers]." He defended yesterday's occupation of two homes in Hebron's Arab market by Jewish settlers.

Mr Arnon said that the homes, and other apartments, were being renovated for the use of Palestinian terrorists who had recently been released from jail. "The problem is that the Palestinian Authority now wants hundreds of released terrorists to be located in these apartments, around Jewish neighbourhoods, in order to cause terror actions and provocations," he said.

About 15 Jews were arrested after soldiers evicted the settlers from the flats. Later Palestinians threw two petrol bombs at a Jewish home in Hebron. No one was hurt.

Hebron's Arab Mayor, Mustafa Natshe, rejected Mr Arnon's claims that Jewish settlers would be in danger when the troops withdrew. He said the Palestinian Authority had controlled all other major towns in the West Bank for more than 12 months. "The situation is better than before, when the Israeli Army was there," he said.

More than 400 Jewish settlers live and study in the centre of Hebron, surrounded by more than 100,000 Palestinian residents.

Israeli and Palestinian negotiators in Jerusalem worked throughout the day to reach an agreement on the long overdue troop redeployment. A Palestinian official said he expected an accord to be completed within a week.

Progress was reported after a summit on Tuesday between Israel's Prime Minister, Binyamin Netanyahu, and the Palestinian President, Yassir Arafat, at the Erez Crossing on the border with the Gaza Strip.

Dennis Ross, the American Middle East peace envoy who has brokered the latest negotiations, said the two sides had "made real progress" before flying back to Washington to brief President Clinton last night.

After the document is initialled by the two leaders, it will be taken before the Israeli and Palestinian Authority Cabinets before being signed.

Mr Netanyahu is expected to face opposition from Ariel Sharon, his National Infrastructure Minister, who has told cabinet colleagues that the agreement is weak on security.

☐ **Arafat visit:** Mr Arafat was one of tens of thousands of pilgrims who flocked to Bethlehem on Christmas Eve. It was his second Christmas in the West Bank city since Palestinian self-rule was introduced in Bethlehem 12 months ago.

On Monday, his Christian-born wife, Suha, lit a modest tree in the town's Manger Square to begin the celebrations.

AFP

Israeli police remove Jewish settlers from a roof in Hebron during protests against a plan to withdraw troops

Greetings from the Pope in 55 languages

FROM REUTER IN ROME

THE Pope wished the world a happy Christmas in 55 languages yesterday, but said the spirit of the nativity was marred by tensions in the Holy Land and international indifference to the tragedy in Africa.

In his *Urbi et Orbi* blessing and message, the 76-year-old Polish pontiff said Christmas meant not being resigned to violence and injustice, but striving to overcome hatred and returning to dialogue.

The Pope spoke to thousands in a rainy St Peter's Square, uttering greetings in languages from Arabic and Hebrew to tongues spoken in Burundi and Rwanda.

"The echo of the songs of Christmas must travel much farther," he said. "It must resound beyond walls where the clash of arms is still heard, shattering the spell of peace brought by this holy day."

The Pope, who was celebrating his 19th Christmas as leader of the world's 960 million Roman Catholics, has suffered a series of health problems in recent years. He celebrated midnight Mass in St Peter's Basilica, but missed the Christmas Day Mass on doctors' advice, underlining the fact that age is eroding his stamina.

Photograph, page 22

Terror keeps the tourists out of Manger Square

O little town of Bethlehem,
How still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless
sleep
The silent stars go by

At the end of his Middle Eastern journey, **Christopher Walker**, reports on Bethlehem's growing gloom

THE soothing words of the carol belie the modern reality of economic hardship, seething Palestinian frustration, religious differences and potential terrorist violence that lie just below the surface in the birthplace of Jesus.

Less than 300 yards from the fourth-century Church of the Nativity, which many believe marks the spot where Mary went into labour, hand-knitted blue-and-green balaclava masks for terrorist use, with slits for the eyes and mouth, are openly on sale. Residents said that they were used both by the radical Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine and Hamas, the Islamic Resistance Movement.

To those familiar with the growing militancy of Bethlehem youth, it came as no surprise last week when the Palestinian Authority announced that one of three members of the PFLP given long jail sentences for the recent ambush which killed two Jewish settlers, a mother and her 12-year-old son, in the occupied West Bank came from Bethlehem.

Moderate local Palestinian leaders, such as Elias Freij, 78, the veteran Mayor, blame the growing extremism on the deteriorating economic situation since Israel's crippling closure of the West Bank.

"It is a short-sighted collective punishment on everyone who lives in Bethlehem. Not only has it hit the main industry, tourism, in the run-up to Christmas, it has caused unemployment to jump to 40 per cent — and that for people who receive no benefits like you get in England," said the Greek Orthodox Mayor.

Prospective tourists have panicked at the televised images of the military checkpoint which straddles the main road into Bethlehem and the fierce gun battles in September between the Israeli troops and Palestinian policemen.

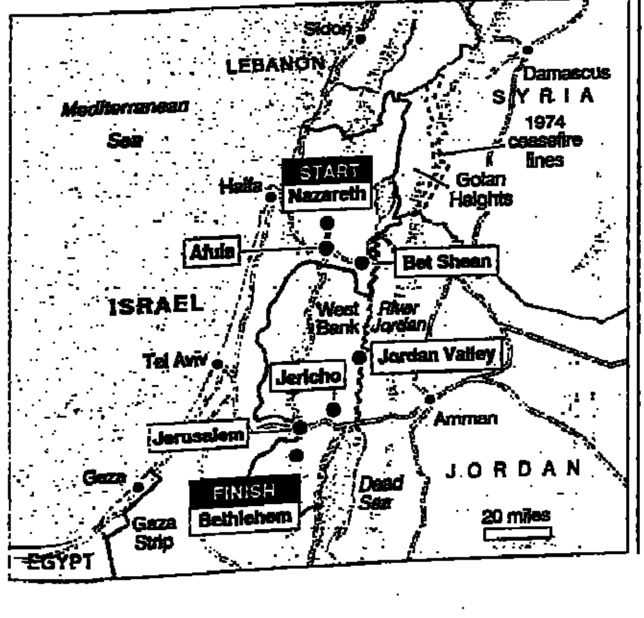
Some of the worst fighting took place on the outskirts of Bethlehem around Israeli-controlled Rachel's Tomb, now being ringed with a new wall against suicide bombers.

As a result, on the second Christmas since Israeli military control gave way to Palestinian self-rule there were more rooms vacant in Bethlehem's "inns", its six main hotels, and assorted religious hostels than at any time since the Israeli conquest of the city from Jordan in the 1967 Six-Day War. At the end of last week, the 72-room Bethlehem Star hotel had only two guests.

Michael Kreitem, the manager, said cancellations were pouring in. He showed a typical letter of cancellation from a British group organised by the De La Salle Brothers. "You — as I am — are worried about the present situation and the wisdom or folly of going to Israel when there is such turmoil in the areas where most of our shrines exist," wrote the organiser.

The same gloomy picture was painted by a Franciscan who produced records to show the number of pilgrims had dropped by 30 per cent. "It is now even worse than during the most violent days of the [1987-1993] Palestinian intifada," he said, speaking at the church marking the area where tradition says the angel appeared before the shepherds "keeping watch over their flocks by night".

Around Manger Square, Palestinian anger was tangible at the Boez Field souvenir shop where the new owner, Jamal Khouri, who had plunged his life's savings into the enterprise, in an attempt to cash in the so-called "peace dividend" so widely spoken of at the time of the 1993 Israeli-Palestinian peace accord, stood amid shelves of untouched merchandise.



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Islamists warn Chirac of terror campaign

FROM ADAM SAGE IN PARIS

ALGERIAN Islamic fundamentalists, in a letter to President Chirac, have issued a warning that they plan to continue their terror campaign in France, threatening to "destroy your country".

The letter, written in Arabic and delivered on Christmas Eve, urges M Chirac to cut all links with Algiers and intervene on behalf of extremists imprisoned in Algeria. It comes three weeks after a bomb exploded on a Paris train, killing four people in what was interpreted as a resumption of Islamic violence on French soil.

The letter, from the extremist Armed Islamic Group, makes an implicit claim of responsibility for the attack, saying: "We are engaged on the path of massacres and killings. We do what we say. The events of the past few days prove it."

Last year the group was behind a wave of bombings which left eight people dead and scores injured. Its latest threat, delivered on the second anniversary of the hijacking of an Air France Airbus by fundamentalists, will raise fears that France is facing a repeat of the 1995 campaign.

In the letter, which was also sent to the Agence France-Presse news agency in Paris, the group tells M Chirac that he must meet a list of demands if "you want us to stop killing you". It calls, for example, for the liberation of one of its leaders, Abu Adlan Abdelhaq Layada, who is in an Algerian prison after his arrest in Morocco in 1993.

The extremists who hijacked the Air France plane on Christmas Eve, 1994, before they were shot dead by French police, also demanded his release. The group's letter, which was signed by its "emir", Antar Zouari, called on M Chirac to end all support for President Zeroual's regime in Algiers. France has drawn the fundamentalists' wrath by offering the Algerian Government significant financial help. Finally, the group says that unless the French administration pays it a "tribute" it will continue to kill French citizens in Algeria.

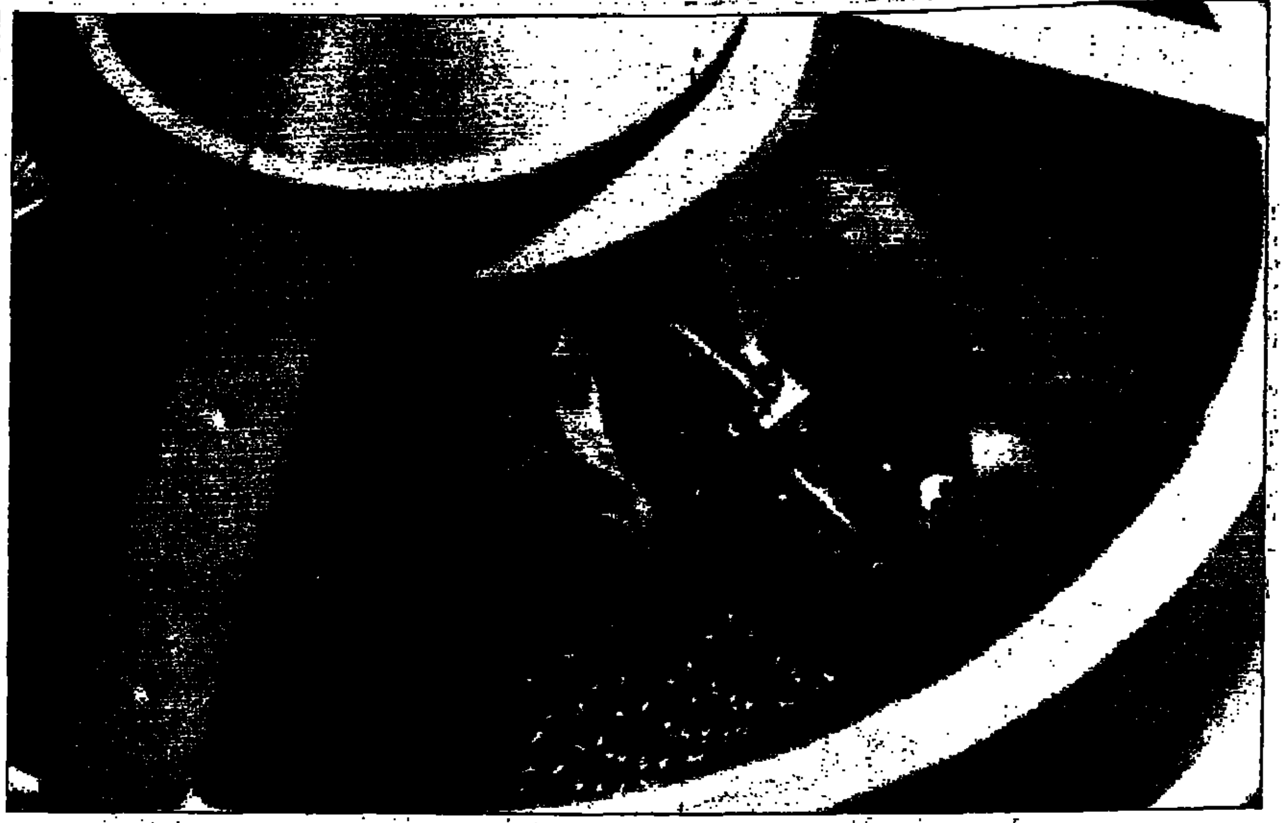
The demands are manifestly beyong the reach of M Chirac's Government, which has adopted a tough stance towards Islamic fundamentalism. But the Algerian fundamentalists do not appear to be aware of or concerned by political reality: at the height of last year's campaign they wrote to M Chirac urging him to "convert to Islam".

The 1995 bombings ended when French police shot dead Khaled Kelkal, a French-born Muslim who had been recruited along with other militants into the fundamentalist guerrilla ranks. Information found in his diary enabled detectives to track down and arrest the ringleaders and break up the three "military units" operating in Paris, Lille and Lyons.

However, the French secret service has said that the Armed Islamic Group — in practice a fragmented network of extremist cells — would try to re-establish itself. Evidence that its fears were founded came with the Paris Metro bomb on December 3. Then this week the legal authorities announced they had broken up a ten-man fundamentalist cell, described as "potentially dangerous". Paris hopes that these arrests will prevent the extremists from carrying out their threats against France.

However, given the shadowy nature of the Armed Islamic Group and the extent of the support it enjoys among French Muslims in the poor suburbs around France's main cities, the authorities remain wary.

The intense security operation, codenamed Vigipirate, which was put in place after the Metro bomb, will be maintained for the foreseeable future, Paris says.



Monkeys back in space

Multik, a macaque monkey, sits in a space capsule before being put aboard a Russian spacecraft that was launched into orbit around Earth from the Plesetsk Cosmodrome in Russia, 300 miles below the Arctic Circle, on Tuesday (Thomas de Waal writes). Two monkeys are on board — despite the protests of animal rights activists — as part of a Russian-French project on weightlessness. "Captain" Multik, three, and Lapik, four, will stay in a four square yard capsule for 14 days before being parachuted back to Earth in northern Kazakhstan or the southern Urals.

The monkeys have had space training, learning to eat and drink through tubes. They have been taught to press pedals and computer keys in return for injections of juice. The programme's scientists are delighted that the monkeys have mastered computers and are letting them play computer games to while away their hours in orbit.

Patten presides over the end of a Christmas era

BY JAMES PRINGLE

HONG KONG yesterday celebrated its last Christmas under British rule and, as the RTHK government radio station broadcast the Queen's Christmas message, there was a decided "end of an era" feel to this vibrant city, now quite visibly preparing for its new rulers from Peking.

Royal insignia are being removed from government buildings already, and on Christmas Eve the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals here announced that it would drop the "royal" from its title on January 1, six months before China resumes sovereignty.

The RSPCA thus joins other venerable Hong Kong institutions such as the Jockey Club in severing the royal connection. The future SPCA said it would retain some contact with the parent body in Britain, but would establish closer links with animal welfare groups, such as exist, in China.

As it has for the past 147 years, the cream of Hong Kong's fading colonial society gathered under the slowly rotating ceiling fans at St John's Anglican Cathedral for a nostalgic midnight service on Christmas Eve, joined by hundreds of Chinese Christians and Filipino domestic staff. The latter, though mostly Roman Catholics, seemed quite happy to sing carols and to pray — possibly for the Chinese really to let them stay on after June 1997 — with the Anglicans.

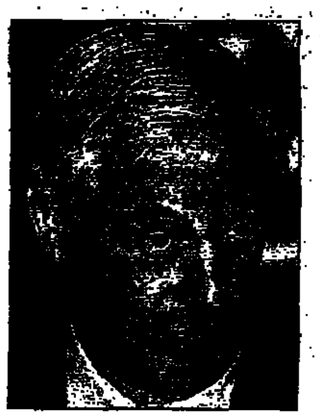
Overflow crowds spilt out around the cathedral at which a British Governor, in this case Chris Patten, was making a last Christmas appearance. He, his wife, Lavender, and daughters Laura, Kate and Alice were there, as was an extended Patten family group that occupied two pews. They heard prayers that Hong Kong's leaders be granted wisdom.

A Catholic, the Governor went to Mass at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral yesterday. Then it was a round of Christmas Day parlour games, such as Postman Pat at Government House which, under Chinese rule, may become a "museum of colonial history". Last night he hosted an hour-long radio programme of classical music, but he included Pete Seeger's *Turn, Turn, Turn*, Jimmy Durante's *As Time Goes By*, and *Amazing Grace*. "I hope all is well with you this Christmas," he told listeners. "And I hope it will be well for you next year and for all the years after that in this, one of the greatest cities of the world."

Elsewhere in Hong Kong, a pub party turned into a street battle between highly paid British labourers, some with painted and tattooed faces, in Wanchai, the once raunchy area made famous in the 1950s novel *The World of Suzie Wong*.

Soldiers of the British garrison tried to break it up, but the workers, some of several thousand Britons working on the new airport and other construction projects, turned on them, trashing a 7-Eleven store as they cleared the shelves of bottles to use as weapons. "It was really crazy," said a barman. "In the end the streets were littered with people lying unconscious and covered in blood."

But, whatever happens, Christmas will not die out quickly in Hong Kong, even though only 8 per cent of the population is Christian: it will remain a two-day holiday under China's system of "one country, two systems".



Patten: hosted a radio show

Outrage as three die in Cape bombing

FROM RAY KENNEDY IN JOHANNESBURG

A CHRISTMAS EVE bomb attack on a supermarket in a quiet South African town killed three people, two of them children, and left 56 injured.

It was the first such outrage since a series of bombings in town centres by white right-wing extremists before democratic elections in 1994.

Two crude pipe bombs, packed with explosives and jagged metal to inflict maximum casualties, went off without warning within five minutes of each other at lunchtime in a busy shopping area at Worcester, 60 miles from Cape Town.

The first, concealed in a concrete rubbish bin, exploded near the crowded supermarket entrance where most of the casualties occurred. The second, in a plastic container on a pavement, went off outside a chemist's shop about 75 yards away. Three black men were seen speeding away from the scene in a car.

Political leaders expressed outrage over the attack as President Mandela hosted a party for hundreds of children at his residence in Pretoria. F. W. de Klerk, the National Party leader, said he hoped that South Africa was not returning to the level of violence that existed in the country during the final months of his Government before the 1994 voting.

In KwaZulu/Natal, police said yesterday that five people, including a five-year-old child, were murdered overnight.

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G&H

US condemns Serbian President for provoking street battles

From Ian Brodie
in Washington

THE United States condemned President Milosevic of Serbia for organising and inciting protesters who clashed violently with opponents of his Government in central Belgrade.

Undaunted by police beatings, enemies of Mr Milosevic took to the icy streets again yesterday. They took brooms, brushes and detergent to the site of his supporters' gathering to "decontaminate" the streets. There was no sign, however, of the previous day's massive presence of riot police or pro-government workers that had abruptly intensified Serbia's political crisis after four weeks of peaceful demonstrations.

The accusation that Mr Milosevic and his Socialist Government were responsible for the street battles was made by Strobe Talbott, the Deputy Secretary of State and a close confidant of President Clinton's since their days together at Oxford.

"The Serbian authorities have flagrantly and provocatively chosen to heighten tensions by bringing thousands of people into Belgrade to confront peaceful demonstrations by the Opposition," he said.

Mr Talbott repeated the warning first made two weeks ago by Warren Christopher, the Secretary of State, that Serbia could face a renewal of economic sanctions. They were lifted earlier this year in recognition of Mr Milosevic's support in drawing up the Dayton accords that led to an uneasy peace in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The protests and the strong American reaction have been provoked by Mr Milosevic's annulment of results from municipal elections last month in which opposition parties won in 15 of 18 cities, including Belgrade, the capital. The United States reiterated demands that Mr Milosevic respect the election results, negotiate with the Opposition and reopen two popular radio stations that he closed down.

Washington's criticism was echoed in Paris and Bonn where Klaus Kinkel, the German Foreign Minister, gave a warning that any further violence would damage Serbia's efforts to reintegrate with Europe.

Mr Milosevic gave no hint, however, of yielding to outside pressure during a rare public appearance on Christmas Eve to address about 50,000 supporters, described by the State Department as "rent-a-crowd". He denounced the opposition leaders as foreign lackeys. "Strong Serbia is not to the liking of some powers abroad and that's why they're trying to break it up with the help of domestic traitors," he said.

The Milosevic supporters were brought in from outlying areas, but the endeavour may have been counter-productive. The busloads of villagers, having received their news only from Serbia's sanitised state-run television, were astonished to find about 300,000 opposition supporters gathered to march through Belgrade.

Although opposition leaders had appealed for calm, about 10,000 supporters broke away from the main march and moved towards the cordon of heavily armed police who fired teargas, clubbed demonstrators and waded in to separate the factions. Belgrade's emergency clinic treated 58 people for injuries. Five went to hospital, including one man who remained in a critical condition after being shot in the head by a Socialist.

Opposition leaders said more large protests are planned. They are also hoping that a fact-finding mission from the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe will soon deliver a verdict in their favour on the November 17 elections.

Three killed in church suicide bombing

By Roger Boyes

AN APPARENTLY deranged German woman has killed herself and at least two worshippers in a suicide bombing at a small, crowded Christmas Eve midnight service.

Yesterday morning forensic scientists were carrying human remains out of the white stone Protestant church in Sindlingen, on the fringes of Frankfurt's financial centre. The explosion ripped a hole not only in the church — the shattered wooden pews gave a hint of the force of the blast in the enclosed space — but also in the country's festive season. "Why at Christmas? Why in a church? And who is this woman?" asked a Berlin radio commentary, echoing questions posed around the country.

The woman, who was not known to the 70 other worshippers, positioned herself in one of the pews. She attracted notice only because she was still wearing a cape while other worshippers had removed their outdoor garments.

Minutes after church bells had finished tolling for the midnight service, the woman detonated at least two grenades strapped to her abdomen. The blast immediately killed two sisters, aged 59 and 61, sitting on the same line of pews. Bits of bodies flew everywhere. Yesterday shards of bone were still being dug out of the church wall. The decapitated head of the woman — evidently in her 30s — has been recovered.

Ten parishioners were taken to hospital. Some, including a 12-year-old girl, were said to be in a serious condition.

The explosion chiefly hit the back of the church. A Christmas tree next to the altar — where some of the wounded were given first aid — was left intact in the explosion, which blew out windows. Most wounds seemed to have been caused by flying shrapnel. Blood and scorch marks could be seen throughout the church.

Parishioners, still in shock yesterday, could only vaguely remember that the woman looked nervous. Police later said the suspected bomber had brown hair and blue eyes.

Manfred Feist, a police spokesman, seemed, on the basis of initial inquiries, to rule out religious or political motives. There had been some tension in the parish, from which the pastor, Hans Blum, is due to retire at the end of the year, but no one could conceive that the "misunderstandings" (in the words of one parishioner) could lead to such a massacre. "The evidence indicates that she was distressed and wanted to kill herself in a spectacular action," Herr Feist said.

The Protestant community in Frankfurt is tight-knit. Most parishioners know each other and, in the case of the Sindlingen church, many work in the same place: the Hoechst chemical factory. The stranger in the cape would have attracted more notice under normal circumstances, but the Christmas Eve service was regarded as a time when the "once a year" worshippers came to church.

The central question of why the woman chose to kill herself in such a way — innocent people were bound to be hurt — continued to puzzle Germans. One possible explanation is that she wanted to pray before going elsewhere to commit suicide but set off the grenades by mistake. Prayers for the victims are to be said today in Protestant and Roman Catholic churches throughout Germany.

JÜRGEN MAHNKE/AFP

Police sift through the wreckage for evidence yesterday after the bombing in the Sindlingen church

Moroccans risk all for life in Europe

From Tunku Varadarajan in Marrakesh

WIRY, unshaven and blessed with a quick intelligence, Abdelkrim Ghezali has one aim, which he shares with thousands of his compatriots throughout Morocco. He wants to live and work in Europe.

Part of a stifling phenomenon that has made Morocco's young men one of the country's key illegal exports, Mr Ghezali, 23, is determined to cross the Strait of Gibraltar next summer. He has not had "a proper job" since he left school at 14, and the pull of Europe seems impossible to resist.

Spain is only 12 miles away, within reach for those prepared to travel at night in flimsy plywood boats. Even in December, when the weather is bleak, scores are detained every week by the maritime service of the Spanish Civil Guard.

Last summer, when Moroccans tried to reach Europe in unprecedented numbers, more than 50 were apprehended each day. About 1,300 were detained in June alone.

Sipping mint tea in a café in Marrakesh's open-air market square, Mr Ghezali explained why he, too, had decided that he would also try to leave Morocco. "Look, this place is stagnant. Either I hustle tourists, sing sad ballads, and turn cartwheels for the crowds, or I starve."

Mr Ghezali's choice of word, "stagnant", startling in someone with so little formal education, sums up Morocco's problems and its charms. Western visitors are especially drawn to the country's unchanged ways. Yet it is this apparent absence of change which so stifles young Moroccans like Mr Ghezali.

Fifty-one per cent of the country's people are illiterate, and unemployment stands at 20 per cent, although for those under 30 the total is more than twice that figure. Per capita income in Morocco, North Africa's poorest country, is $1,300 (£800) a year.

Fifteen die as bus overturns

Dubai: Six women and nine children were killed and 38 other passengers were injured early yesterday when a bus ran off the road in Saudi Arabia and overturned. A traffic official said the victims were Saudis, Palestinians and Jordanians. The accident occurred near the northern city of Arar after the bus crossed the border from Jordan.

In Amman, a Jordanian official said 13 Jordanians were killed and 23 were injured in the crash. The official Petra state news agency said Crown Prince Hassan had ordered two military helicopters to transport the injured Jordanians for treatment in the capital's specialised Hussein Medical Centre. *(Reuter)*

Firms pay for pollution

Tokyo: Fourteen Japanese companies agreed to pay 3.1 billion yen (£16 million) to 438 people who complained of illnesses from air pollution. The decision ended a 14-year dispute. An official of NKK Corp, one of the world's five largest steelmakers, said the group accepted an out-of-court settlement recommended by courts, considering the age of the plaintiffs. They had blamed the pollution on plants in Kawasaki, an industrial city adjoining Tokyo. Of the original plaintiffs, 138 have died, including some from illnesses attributed to air pollution. *(AP)*

Soldier kills five comrades

Srinagar: An Indian soldier shot dead five comrades including two officers, and wounded seven. The soldier, from the Rashtriya Rifles in Sopore, Jammu and Kashmir state, "ran amok and fired indiscriminately at his colleagues before he was overpowered", an army spokesman said. The regiment is the counter-insurgency wing of the army, which is engaged in controlling a separatist rebellion by Muslim guerrillas in Kashmir. The spokesman said the soldier appeared to be homesick. *(Reuter)*

Alert as cheese goes off

Paris: An airline steward who liked ripe French cheeses but could not stand their smell in his hotel room caused a bomb scare in Paris. The steward, who was in the city on a stopover, had placed the cheeses in a box on the windowsill. But hotel staff, alert for bombs after four people were killed and dozens wounded in a suspected Islamic fundamentalist blast on a Paris commuter train this month, spotted the box and called police. They pronounced the package tasty, but harmless. *(Reuter)*

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هكذا في الاصل

Dr Thomas Stuttaford on the the benefits of regular exercise, the origins of anaesthesia and how too much drink can affect the feet

Celebrate the men who first mastered pain

The hospital wards have been emptied of all of those who are fit enough to go home for Christmas, but will start to fill up again tomorrow. Patients who are being admitted for routine surgery should go down on their knees in thankfulness to doctors who worked over Christmas 150 years ago, when the first anaesthetics were used in Britain.

On December 19, 1846, a dental surgeon, James Robinson, gave a Miss Lonsdale an anaesthetic with ether for removing her tooth. Miss Lonsdale felt nothing, woke up none the worse for her experience. The doctors were not to be outdone. Two days later Robert Liston, a famous surgeon in his day, amputated the leg of Frederick Churchill at University College Hospital. William Squire, a medical student, administered the ether. Mr Churchill did not experience any pain.

Previously Mr Liston had had to rely upon his skill at being able to wield the scalpel and saw very rapidly to save his patients the agony of a prolonged operation. He was able to amputate a leg, tie off the arteries to stop bleeding, and stitch the skin back over the stump within 28 seconds. Even so, many patients fainted from the pain, and there was an appreciable mortality.

Fainting was always a merciful relief to the rest of the ward. In 1846, operations at University College Hospital took place behind the normal bed screens and the shouts of the victim were an uncomfortable reminder to those who had already had their operation, and a terrible portent for those who were waiting.

Before the development of anaesthesia very few operations were possible. The 28-second lower limb amputation was just bearable if the patient had a strong constitution, but the concept of doing more than superficial surgery was unthinkable. Once cancers started to fungate (break down, ooze and bleed), they were removed even before an anaesthesia had been introduced, but contemporary accounts describe the agony patients had to suffer. The only other internal surgery regulary undertaken was that for the removal of bladder stones.

Advances in surgery which have revolutionised medicine in the past 150 years were possible only because of the ever-increasing skill of anaesthetists. The more specialised anaesthesia has become, the greater the scope surgeons have had to explore the cavities of the bodies — the abdomen, the thorax and the skull — which have hitherto been beyond their reach.

The news of the two operations done in the Christmas week of 1846 quickly spread to the great surgical centres of Britain. Within months every large city hospital was giving anaesthetics before surgery.

Chloroform was introduced in 1847, and 30 years later cocaine was first used as a local anaesthetic. Since then the art of anaesthesia has become very sophisticated and today anaesthetists run acute and chronic pain management teams, they control intensive-care units, they co-ordinate resuscitation services and still provide safe anaesthesia so that surgeons may do their operations — obstetricians can deliver babies and physicians may undertake invasive investigations.

It is now possible for a woman to have a baby so that her delivery is painless. A well delivered epidural block provides complete anaesthesia, and yet the patient remains mobile. Recently a patient decided during the second stage of her labour that her husband was looking a bit tired. She had been up since 4am and it was now supper time. Anxious to keep him cheerful, she leapt from the labour ward bed to make him a cup of tea. The anaesthesia given during obstetrics is only one of the branches of the discipline that is constantly improving.

James Paget, a legendary surgeon, lived near St Bartholomew's Hospital in the 1840s in order to be close to the wards. His wife was not happy with this arrangement, as the screams of the patients on operating days upset her. But she was able to line her windows so that when closed they kept out the cries.

After the introduction of anaesthesia, Mrs Paget launched a campaign for December 19 to be a perpetual Bank Holiday so that the advantages which anaesthesia offers can never be forgotten.

TIM BISHOP

Riding to hounds with the Queen's Hunt at Melton Mowbray: brisk exercise can be good for you — but people with heart trouble should take care

How to stay as fit as a horse

For those who have enjoyed a gluttonous and slothful Christmas, Boxing Day is a time to work off some of the extra calories by taking brisk exercise. The exercise will also lift the mood.

The emphasis should be on brisk exercise. A stroll would not do much good, and violent exercise, such as squash, unless it is taken regularly — which means at least three times a week — can be damaging.

The standard guide to exercise regimes suggests that the person who takes violent exercise once a week, or less often, is placing his or her health at greater risk than if they spent their leisure time sitting on a sofa by the fire.

The occasional exerciser is typified by the City solicitor who sits crouched over his desk Monday to Friday and then exhausts himself on Saturday as he attempts to satisfy his competitive nature by thrashing an opponent on the squash court.

The person who takes exercise only twice a week has a risk of cardiovascular disease, similar to the slothful individual who drives everywhere and lounges indoors whenever possible. Only when someone takes violent exercise three times a week or more often is there any apparent advantage.

However, there is no better way of reducing the possibility of coronary heart disease than by taking regular steady exercise, preferably daily. And there is no better time to start putting good resolutions into practice than Boxing Day.

Brisk exercise can be defined as the amount that is needed to induce enough breathlessness to make conversation slightly difficult without it in any way preventing you from talking if you need to.

Ideally, everybody should aim to have 20 to 30-minutes brisk walk a day. The very term brisk, daily exercise sounds difficult, boring and even self-consciously worthy. But it can easily be achieved by parking the car slightly farther from the office and then walking; by buying the evening paper from a shop 15 minutes' walk from the house; by taking the dog for its daily exercise, or even by seeking reward for a hard day's work by enjoying a glass of red wine, another cardio-protective measure, at a hostelry about a mile walk away.

Almost everybody, even those who know that they have heart disease, will benefit from a brisk daily walk, but in the case of anyone who knows that their circulation is no longer pristine the exercise should be taken only when the weather is mild. If it is freezing and there is a howling gale blowing, it is safer to take a taxi.

Likewise, patients with known cardiovascular disease should avoid any exercise which makes them grunt, whether the exertion is being spent changing a car wheel, lifting a heavy weight or doing press-ups as part of a morning workout.

A question frequently asked by those who have had heart attacks is whether the exertion of sexual intercourse is safe. The general view, supported by statistics, is that making love is unlikely to lead to heart problems provided that the partner is a regular one, and that there has been a reasonable lapse of time after the last heavy meal.

It unwise to go straight from the table to the bed. One word of caution: brisk exercise taken late at night tends to induce insomnia, rather than produce a drowsy sleepiness.

Revellers' revenge

AFTER the celebrations of the past few days a few revellers will have experienced for the first time a painful swollen joint — and the realisation that they may have gout.

Characteristically, it is the big toe joint which is affected, but any joint can be involved. A gouty joint is not always red, tense and agonisingly painful — some patients may suffer no more than early-morning twinges in their feet as they walk.

Provided that the sufferer is not an excessively heavy drinker, gout usually responds to treatment with the drug allopurinol.

One type of gout — saturnine gout — is more serious, and in the past occasionally followed lead poisoning. Old-fashioned lead seals over the corks in a bottle could leave a deposit of lead around the bottle neck, which could then be washed into the glass.

Snip that protects

THE next church festival after Christmas is not a celebration of the new year but of the circumcision of Christ, which coincides with it. It is a pity that more is not made of the occasion, for few surgical procedures are the subject of more misunderstanding.

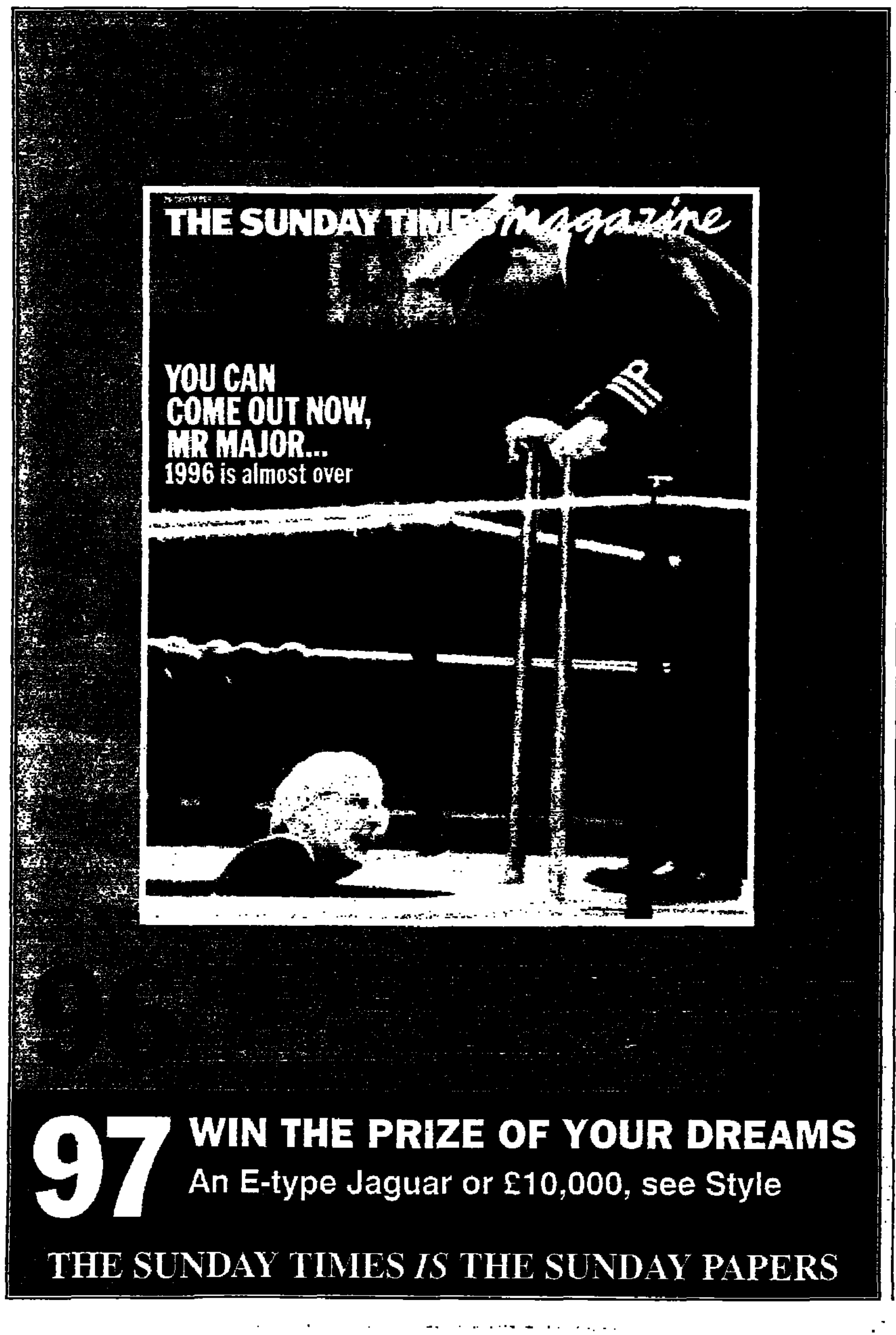
In many parts of the world the practice has become the victim of politically correct medical thinking at a time when it is able to offer greater advantages than ever before.

Apparent reductions in the instance of sexually transmitted diseases in circumcised men in the Western world have in the past always been attributed — sometimes not on very good evidence — to a class bias. Recently the *International Journal of Sexually Transmitted Diseases and Aids* has compared the incidence of sexually transmitted genital sores of varying types in circumcised and non-circumcised tribesmen in Kenya.

Circumcision: unfashionable

If tribesmen lived similar lives the number of cases of genital ulcers was 40 per cent lower in those men who had been circumcised.

These statistics confirm that circumcision offers some protection against venereal diseases.



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Irrelevant academic qualifications are an insult to nurses — and useless to their patients

Is it the end for nurses?

In these short, cold days and long, cold nights, more people get ill and more of those get admitted to hospital. So it isn't surprising that the shortage of nurses is perceived a little more acutely than at other times of the year. Suddenly, *everyone's getting* frightened. But the lack of nurses, which anyway registers rather more as yet in the training colleges than in the wards, has nothing to do with excessive demand. Or at least not from the patients. The trouble, as any student nurse knows, lies rather in the Government's ludicrous requirements.

In the public mind there has been *a dim* awareness that for some time there have been not enough people who want to be nurses. We seek, reasonably enough I suppose, a financial explanation. Everyone knows that nurses don't get paid enough, so why look any further for something that would justify the shortfall of willing students? After all, the spirit of the age hardly embraces the vocational selflessness *that* earlier produced generations of hard-working, ill-paid nurses.

But I'm not sure that is the case. Yes, I know that whenever teenage girls are interviewed about why they wouldn't want to be nurses they automatically respond that the pay's no good and the hours are too long. Obviously, poor conditions are a factor. But what is really *keeping students* out of nursing colleges is something called Project 2000. This is the plan to *make* nursing training more academic and theory-based. And, frankly, can anything be more idiotic than that?

So what happens? The basic requirements for entry for what is now a diploma course are far more stringent than they used to be. On average, applicants are required to have five or six GCSEs at grade C or above; there is talk of demanding an A-level *pass, too. This might* sound reasonable enough. Six GCSEs hardly sounds like a mammoth intellectual demand, I do see. But think of what is required of a nurse, of what you would want from a nurse were you in hospital, and I bet the ability to pass exams would not be on your list.

Nigella Lawson

It is truly the mark of an intellectually fading society to place so much misguided emphasis on academic qualifications. All it does is produce great numbers of people striving for mediocrity. I know that the Govern*ment thought it was doing a good deal* for nurses, flattering them by telling them that theirs was a demanding, valuable career. Well, it is, but not in the way the diploma course is making it. The sort of people who are natural nurses are put off, or are now considered ineligible, before they can be given a chance. And there is a huge dropout rate among those who do start their training — simply because the qualities that make people good nurses are not the same qualities that make people good at passing exams.

But there is scarcely less work involved now in training to be a nurse than in following a degree course. It's no wonder that prospective students feel that if they're going to have to slog over their books for three years, they may as well do a degree and try to get a better-paid job. Apparently, interested bodies are considering upgrading the current diploma course to a full ~~degree, as if~~ that could possibly be the answer. *This is a move* ~~in the~~ *wrong* direction: the course is not practically enough based as it is. Student nurses need to be in hospitals, *not* classrooms.

It is not just that the sort of people who would make the best nurses can't cope with the academic expectations made of them, but that it is making the senior nurses who have to deal with them once they qualify pretty fed up, too. Because what we end up with are supposedly-trained nurses who don't know the first thing about what they need to do as a nurse. All the assignments they are given as part of their training — health promotion in the community, how research influences drug prescribing and so on — are of no help then.

What they are expected to study during the course is, as student nurses have complained to me, research. They read papers and papers and have to learn about what the research says, how it *leads to which findings and why, and then the* students end up on the wards and don't know how to give an injection or take someone's blood pressure.

And it isn't flattering to nurses, it's insulting. Nursing is an honorable, worthy job: pretending it needs academic status to give it respectability is blunderingly offensive — and silly. But it goes along with the phoney titles and pretensions of modern disciplines. It is sadly to the point that when Radio 4's *PM* programme did a story on the shortage of nurses the other day, the snippet of nurses' training they carried was a recording from a lecture on "the philosophy of nursing". Just as long as the nurse who looks after me when I'm next in hospital hasn't been majoring on that one . . .

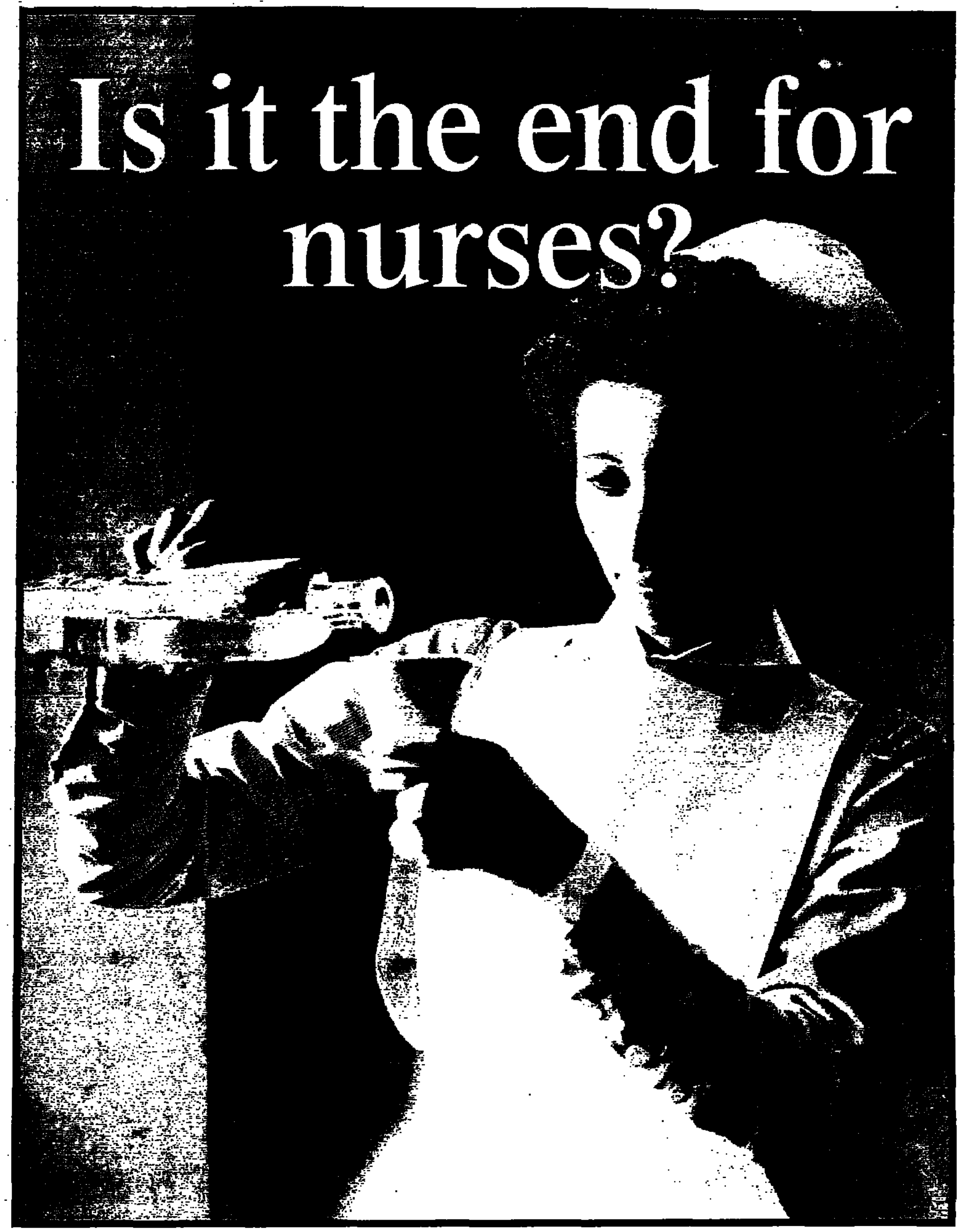
Now, I know it is the case that nursing can entail duties that require advanced medical techniques. I still hold, however, that the ability to perform them doesn't rest on intellectual ability exactly. But *what I do see is* that nursing has a variety of requirements: that it isn't just one job. So don't offer just one — the most demanding — sort of training.

It is all part of this ridiculous modern myth that everyone has the same abilities, that we should all be able to do the same work. In the old days it was understood that there were gradations of ability and that appropriate work could be found.

People who wanted to go into nursing could train either to be an SEN, which required little in the way of academic application, or an SRN. In an occupation like nursing you do need a large infantry. Why deprecate that? What is certainly important is that there should be mobility within the profession. That can be attended to. But what is idiotic is to put those who could be good nurses off at the very beginning, or rather before they even start. In an age of great unemployment it is madness for there to be a shortage of nurses.

What it all points to is the great gap in our education system. We are used to discussing the poor academic standards, but that is nothing in comparison with the poor non-academic standards. People who have any number of practical abilities and skills are merely made to feel bad for not being exam fodder. Once the school-leaving age was raised to 16 that was always going to be a problem, and unemployment figures being what they are, no government will ever want to see the school-leaving age lowered.

I passionately agree that it is important that as many schoolchildren as possible can do as well as they can, but believing that the only training that will equip them to understand or survive in the world is academic is utterly foolish. We are training entire generations to be disappointed in themselves and in the world. And we will soon have no one ready or willing to do the jobs at which any number of shiny, qualified university graduates would be absolutely hopeless.



Practical nursing: a nurse needs hands-on experience like this, not a string of GCSEs and a qualification in health promotion in the community

'Being a Freud has its problems, it tends to detain you'

Lucian Freud's daughter, the novelist Susie Boyt, deliberately chooses not to use her famous surname. Interview by **Noreen Taylor**

"I'd rather not talk about my family," announces the young, pale-skinned 27-year-old in the grey wool outfit. *Lowering her eyes to* brush a stray thread from her knee, the words rush out as though she has prepared them but is unsure whether she has the nerve to deliver them.

Susie Boyt's family are the Freuds, the talented tribe that peoples the spectrum of creative careers in literature, fashion design, television, art and public relations.

Given Susie's reticence, it's odd that her publisher had sent me masses of gossipy cuttings on the life of her father, Lucian Freud, arguably Britain's greatest living figurative painter. His background is splashed with exuberant brushes of rakish bohemianism and splattered with lovers, wives and children.

"Yeuk," murmured Susie when I tell her. Neither rakish nor bohemian are words appropriate to the youngest child of the painter and one of his mistresses, Suzy Boyt.

Susie, *who has just* published her second novel, presumably wishes applause for her own literary accomplishments. Emotionally robust, with strong new skin grown *through what she calls "bad* patches where I tended to overeat, culminating in a mid-life crisis when I was 21", she says she has turned her life around to the way she wants it. "At the moment, it seems as though everything has come together, which is why I wanted to show in my second novel that you don't have to go through life really depressed.

"I want people to feel ambitious *for their lives*, not to feel it's something they have to *struggle on through*. I've always wanted to write, always been one of those anecdotal people viewing life through a series of stories.

"Even if I hadn't been published I would *still* write. I had already steeled myself to a succession of rejection slips, believing that if your writing is good then it'll keep until it is discovered. I wrote my novels in the morning, keeping my afternoons free for various part-time jobs. I've worked in a literary agent's office, in a bookshop, typed for people, and have learnt to be quite economical since I've lived on my own since 20."

Susie Boyt: "I want people to feel ambitious for their lives, not feel it's something they have to struggle on through"

Boyt's first novel, *The Normal Man*, has been described as an intelligent study of a vulnerable young girl in mourning for her dead father. In her second, *The Characters of Love*, her heroine is an Oxford student, daughter of a successful psychiatrist who flits in and out of her life, creating a craving which she feeds through an obsession with another much older man, her tutor. The heroine, Nell, psychologically damaged by her father's attitude, lists in a notebook the grievances she has harboured against him. *Unable to bring herself to talk* in any depth of her own father and their relationship, Susie *opts* for airy evasiveness.

"We're quite close now though I *didn't* see a lot of *my* father when growing up, but *my* mother was marvellous at creating a home. She is an artist, but she stopped painting for 20 years to bring up us five children. She sold lace in an antique shop. I'm very proud of her and glad she kept her own name. Being a Freud has its problems. *Tends* to detain you."

Unravelling the strands of Lucian Freud's family takes patience. Two wives — Kitty, daughter of Jacob Epstein, and Lady Caroline Blackwood — preceded the households of mistresses Suzy Boyt and Bernadine Coverly, a teacher. With Suzy there were five children: Alexander, Isobel, Kai, Rose and Susie. Bernadine had two daughters: Bella and Esther.

"We're very close, *my family*. Both my parents were so excited about my first book. My father phoned up after the first page, raving about it, and kept phoning every couple of pages, making a fuss. I'm very lucky in having such a supportive family.

"Esther organised the writing workshop where I read my pieces. Bella made the coat I wore to my launch party. Rose, who is also a novelist, did the book jacket photo.

"When I was growing up Rose was the main person in my life, although sometimes I think I brought myself up. I was one of those very studious children, one who relished her three hours a night homework. At times, I wonder what it would have been like to have had completely different parents, to have lived in a house with roses round the door. When you come from a background like mine, one that's a bit wild, there is a certain comfort and glamour in ordinary, everyday things."

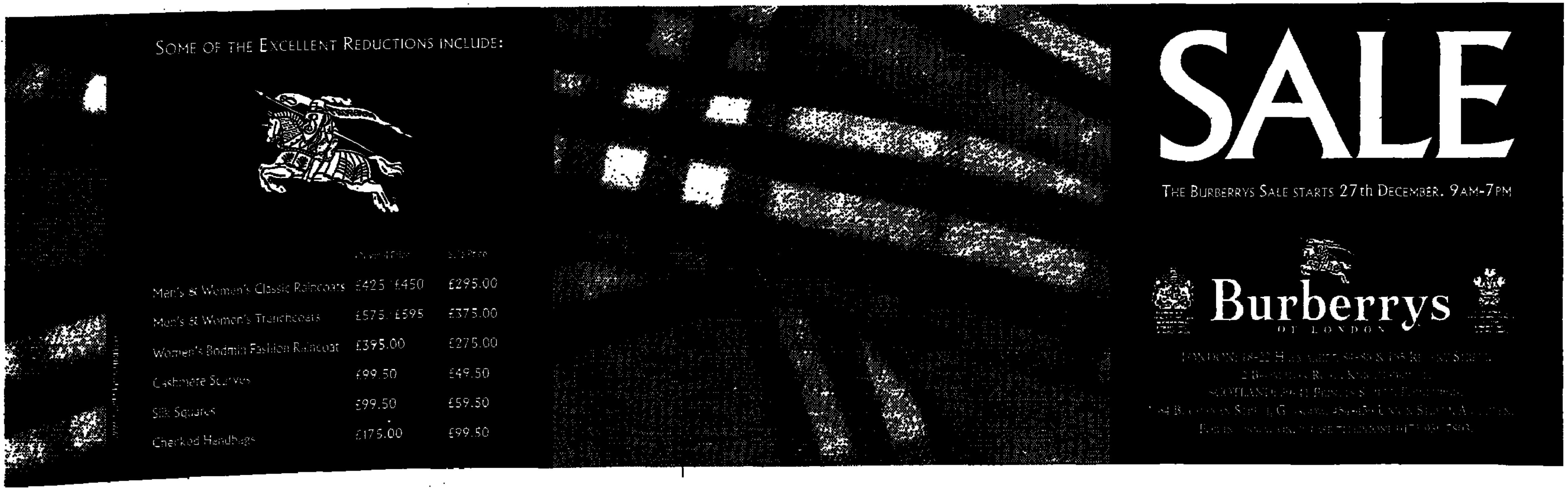
Thrusting forward her left hand in reply to questions about her own romantic status, she cries: "Look, I'm engaged." *Gazing down at the* impressive row of diamonds, she says: "A real Christmas cracker of a ring isn't it?

"Tom, I'd rather not say too much about him, runs a recording studio. Being engaged is lovely, and is, I think, a very important part of being married, a prelude to something that is going to last forever. Marriage and children is something I would take more seriously than anything else in my life. I see my life as being one I have created for myself. Yes, I have been in therapy, although I wouldn't want to go into that. Let's just say I've succeeded in sorting out certain difficulties."

Perhaps writing about them helps. The father and daughter theme in her novels is becoming a familiar refrain. Then again, she has a father who has proved a source of enduring fascination for many women long after disappearing from their lives.

At the age of 74, he remains an elegant figure about town, often accompanied by a fresh beauty. The supply appears *endless despite his age and* a ghostly pallor, resembling a character from a Gothic novel. I suggest he looks like an ogre.

"No, he isn't," says Susie, "and he's not at all frightening. I admire him, the way he has led his life, the rules he has chosen *to live by*."



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Dunblane: time to let go and live

Magnus Linklater urges the bereaved to move on and rejoin the community

I found it hard yesterday not to think of Mick North in his bleak little sitting-room, a dark place in the centre of Dunblane, looking out onto a narrow street near the railway station. I talked to him there a few weeks ago about his daughter Sophie, who was killed by Thomas Hamilton at the primary school on March 13. There were mementoes of her on the walls and the room seemed to have remained untouched since her death. Dr North, a widower, knew that Christmas was going to be tough without her and was not quite certain how he was going to be able to cope with it. I hope it was not as wretched for him as he feared it might be.

We are not, as a nation, good at coping with grief. We tend to bottle it up in ourselves and retreat from it in others, especially if it is too publicly on display. I remember the shock that went through a congregation in a Kensington church some years ago, when, in the course of a funeral service for a greatly respected Pakistani journalist, his widow suddenly rushed over to his coffin and hurled herself on it, sobbing uncontrollably. This was real mourning, which is what the service was meant to be about.

Yet the rest of us, uncertain how to react, sank back into our pews and studied our shoes in silent embarrassment; I remember thinking that a stiff upper lip was a wholly inadequate response to human emotion. The traditional Scottish way of dealing with death used to be to share it with the whole community. The body of the deceased would be laid out in an upstairs room and the bereaved wife or husband would sit beside it, acknowledging visitors and listening to their muttered compliments. After the service, a wake would be held, often involving the consumption of large quantities of whisky. This allowed people to say what they really thought, to offer proper consolation, and to weep without inhibition if necessary. Usually, however, solemnity gave way to celebration and a good Highland wake would be talked of for weeks afterwards. This was a healthy catharsis — the acknowledgement of grief is the first step towards coming to terms with it.

The Dunblane parents did not, of course, have this option. The deaths of their children were so sudden, brutal and public that from the beginning their mourning was conducted in the spotlight of world attention. Drawn together by the trauma, they formed self-support groups which met regularly; they launched a high-profile campaign against handguns and backed initiatives to ensure that nobody should ever forget what had happened. All this was a way of coping with their grief, but it struck a ready chord in the media, coming as it did at a time of national angst about violence and amidst attempts to reassert social values. The parents were a touchstone for the moral climate of the times. Because they were mosty middle-class and articulate and rapidly became well practised in responding to events, there was no lack of coverage of their views.

At the same time, what began to emerge was an intolerance of tone and language that was faintly disturbing. Anyone who expressed the slightest doubt about their campaign on handguns was seen as in some way condoning violence. Politicians were judged on whether they demonstrated total endorsement of the parents' position and the tabloid press routinely damned anyone who questioned their views. It began to seem at times as if they had a monopoly on grief.

It was perhaps inevitable that this should cause tensions in Dunblane itself. There were other inhabitants who had also suffered bereavements, more mundane perhaps, but no less painful. They coped with them as best they could, yet their suffering had to take second place to the suffering of the Dunblane parents. This came to a head over a small incident involving plans to erect a Christmas tree in the local burial ground as a memorial to the children. The cemetery belongs not just to the parents but to everyone whose relatives are buried there. Some of them felt that this was one gesture too far. They lodged protests with the council, which stepped in to forbid the tree. "This is the first time the parents have had to take no for an answer," said one councillor. "But a lot of people have lost loved ones this year, not just the families at the school ... people feel the parents have gone too far."

> Death always leaves a gap and their loss, terrible as it had been, was not unique

That hurt. Dr North, for one, felt that some sort of personal anger was being expressed against them and that it might even be prompted by envy of the publicity they attracted. They decided to withdraw the plans for the tree, but could not help questioning the motives of those who had opposed them. Had they turned against the very people who had suffered so traumatically? The truth was simpler, if harder for the parents to accept: whatever form death takes, it always leaves a gap and their loss, terrible as it had been, was not, in the end, unique. They needed to understand that, although there was no lessening of sympathy towards them, many people felt that the time had come for them to step back, to look ahead rather than to the past, so that life could begin again. The ceaseless publicity, far from drawing the sting of grief, was actually nurturing it, ensuring that the wounds remained open.

With Christmas now over, the time may have come for the Dunblane parents to hand the campaigning over to others, to rejoin the community of which they are a part, and to allow the healing process to begin.

With Korean investment flowing into Britain, we have much to gain — and to learn, says **Joanna Pitman**

The very Seoul of modern Britain

For those of you wrestling with post-Christmas dyspepsia, now may not be the ideal time to start experimenting with pickled union of garlic, cabbage and chilli for breakfast. Sorry to jolt you from the comfort of your toast and crab-apple jelly, but the residents of New Malden will know what I am talking about.

Kimchi. This highly garlicsome pickle is the Korean delicacy largely responsible for the newly odorous nature of New Malden High Street. And like Bisto kids to the scent of gravy, South Koreans are finding their way to this leafy corner of Surrey, putting down roots and gathering around them the beginnings of a Korean cultural infrastructure.

New Malden has Korean bookshops, Korean restaurants, Korean supermarkets, three local Korean newspapers and a Korean travel agency. If there were a touch more concrete on view and a few ginko trees, one could almost mistake the place for a suburb of Seoul.

Some time during the early 1990s a shift occurred in the attentions of British politicians scouring East Asia for inward investment and its associated sources of new employment. Japan, declining into recession and a bout of fierce belt-tightening, was replaced as a target by South Korea, where the economy has been growing fast (7 per cent on average over the past four years) and manufacturing industry has been readying itself to launch a wave of international direct investment, following in the footsteps of the Japanese in search of world market shares.

A United Nations report out this month predicts that Korea's overseas investment drive is about to accelerate and that roughly one tenth of the new investment will come to Europe in search of opportunities in the single market. If, as the Bank of Korea believes, Britain is to continue getting at least one quarter of Europe's share in the manufacturing sector, this means we should be in line for something like another $10-15 billion of new investment in the next five years. And all this thanks to our relatively manageable language, a tempting feast of lavish grants and tax incentives, comparatively low-cost labour and our exclusion from the social chapter (semi-conductor plants need to operate 24 hours a day 365 days a year to make decent returns before they become outdated).

A sizeable flow of Korean funds has already begun. In October, Hyundai announced a £2.7 billion investment in two semi-conductor plants at Dunfermline in Fife. Some 2,000 new jobs are predicted. In July, LG Electronics announced a $2.6 billion semi-conductor and consumer electronics complex for South Wales. The Welsh Development Board is expecting another big investment, and believes that perhaps 20 smaller ones will follow it.

Samsung, the fourteenth biggest industrial conglomerate in the world, has established a $700 million consumer electronics factory at Gateshead and may soon add a semi-conductor plant there, and Daewoo is producing consumer electronics in Northern Ireland, with plans for further investment in a joint venture with Texas Instruments. The latest announcement from Hyundai brings total Korean investment in Britain up an estimated $7 billion.

And South Korea's rising profile in the business world does not stop there. Samsung has commissioned Terry Farrell & Partners to design a new headquarters building which will be the first major corporate edifice visible to motorists entering London on the M4 from Heathrow. The plans show a dramatic glass and steel cylinder topped with an artful arrangement of chopstick-style aerials.

Samsung has also been investing for the past six years in the sponsorship of Cruft's Show (evidence here, perhaps, of a Korean sense of humour, given that some older Koreans, particularly in rural areas, still eat dog). Samsung's chairman is a great animal lover. He keeps a kennel of 120 pedigree dogs of his own (as pets) and sponsors the Korean Olympic riding team, through which he met and became chummy with the Princess Royal, who helped to persuade the Queen to make an exception from her usual policy and officially open Samsung's Gateshead plant last year. The company has also sponsored the Korean gallery in the Victoria and Albert Museum, which opened in 1993, and a Tate Gallery exhibition of contemporary Korean art in 1992.

Samsung is the first to begin spreading its name quite so widely in the British consciousness. But LG Electronics sponsored the Royal College of Art centenary exhibition this year, and others are bound to follow.

Foreign perceptions of Korea have always lagged behind the reality. Because the Koreans are still modest in the geopolitical and diplomatic postures they adopt, the world has tended to underestimate their increasing power. But this month Korea gained two significant new labels. It became the world's eleventh largest economy and it became a member of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Membership of this club of rich nations will probably bring improved access to overseas markets and better credit ratings for overseas loans, as well as new confidence.

Despite their modest but growing influence over our lives, much about Korean society and institutions remains unknown, hidden behind screens of misunderstanding and cliché. All foreign cultures seem paradoxical at first sight. But there are now more than 15,000 Korean residents in this country and growing numbers of visitors — since the ban on overseas travel was lifted after the 1988 Seoul Olympics, the number of Korean visitors to Britain has risen from 14,348 in 1989 to 54,206 for the first six months of this year — so we should have the chance to unravel some of the paradoxes and learn about Korea. And the *kimchi* is actually not too bad in small quantities after dark and a stiff drink. But for true cultural understanding, try the *gopchang bokum* — "special cow dish with intestine sauce".

Gossip, ghosts and grace

John Aubrey's Lives live on, and at last fame is beckoning

William Rees-Mogg

Two of next year's literary anniversaries share an unusual characteristic. John Aubrey, the Wiltshire antiquary, died in 1697; Mary Wollstonecraft, the classical feminist, died in 1797. Both seem much more interesting authors now than they did at the time of their deaths. Mary Wollstonecraft's lasting fame is now secure; her *Vindication of the Rights of Women*, published in 1792, is the foundation stone of women's studies, in the same way that Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations*, 1776, is the foundation of economic theory. Her perceived historical significance can only continue to grow.

Even now, literary fame is only stirring for John Aubrey. He published only one complete book in his lifetime, his *Miscellanies*. The work for which he is best known, his *Brief Lives*, was not published until 1813, and then in an unsatisfactory edition, though there have been many since. Despite his undoubted scholarship — his work on Avebury alone would have justified his fellowship of the Royal Society — his contemporaries saw him as a credulous gossip, which was indeed a part of his character. Only with Roy Dotrice's one-man show, on stage and on television, was Aubrey introduced to a wider 20th-century audience than students of 17th-century literature. His *Brief Lives* is in paperback.

I do not know whether the *Miscellanies*, which is equally enjoyable, is in print. At any rate I do not see it in the bookshops.

Aubrey is one of the two or three most readable prose writers of the English 17th century. Indeed the only other author who is as easy and delightful is Samuel Pepys. Like all good gossips, Aubrey relished trivial or even ridiculous details about the lives of great men. "When Sir Christopher Wren was at Paris about 1671, he was ill and feverish, made but little water, and had a pain i' his reins [kidneys]. He sent for a physician, who advised him to let blood, thinking he had a pleurisy. But bleeding much disagreeing with his constitution, he would defer it a day longer: That night he dreamt that he was in a place where palm trees grew (suppose, Egypt) and that a woman in a romatic habit reached him dates. The next day he sent for dates, which cured him of the pain of his reins." This, from the *Miscellanies*.

Yet Aubrey's curiosity does not end merely with recording the anecdote. The next paragaph continues: "Since, I have learnt that dates are an admirable medicine for the stone, from old Captain Cooke. Take six or ten date stones, dry them in an oven, pulverise and scarce them; take as much as will lie on a sixpence in a quarter of a pint of white wine fasting, and at 4 o'clock in the afternoon: walk or ride an hour after: in a week's time it will give ease, and in a month, cure. If you are at the Bath, the Bath water is better than white wine to take it in."

There is much in this which is of interest to us. There is the insight into the dream: Wren's subconscious mind is dealing with the problem of medical advice he wants to reject; we would now recognise that it was bad advice. The subconscious provides alternative advice, which may well have been better though whether dates do help to pass a kidney stone we do not know: in the 18th century they drank a soapy fluid to lubricate the stone's passage, so it is conceivable dates might have helped. In Sir Christopher Wren's dream there are mythical elements: Egypt had the associations not only of palm trees but of pyramids and ancient knowledge: there is also the sexual image of the "woman in a romantic habit". This is not modern medicine for us, but it is modern 17th-century medicine, and makes some sort of medical as well as psychological sense.

Aubrey jotted down other anecdotes about Sir Christopher Wren for the collection of biographical details which became his *Brief Lives*. Another of them seems quite modern. "It ought never to be forgotten, what our ingenious countryman Sir Christopher Wren proposed to the silk stocking weavers of London, viz a way to weave seven pair or nine pair of stockings at once (It must be an odd number). He demanded £400 for his invention; but the weavers refused it, because they were poor, and besides, they said it would spoil their trade; perhaps they did not consider the proverb that light gains with quick returns make heavy purses. Sir Christopher was so noble, seeing they would not adventure so much money, that he breaks the model of the engine all to pieces before their faces." This is only a brief anecdote, but it foreshadows the economic arguments of the Industrial Revolution, a generation before it began.

Aubrey's interest in the paranormal led him to record many other stories that are still intriguing. John Donne, the poet and Dean of St Paul's, went on a mission to Paris in one of the very early years of the 17th century. His wife, who was pregnant, was reluctant about his going; he decided not to do so, but was persuaded by Sir Robert Drury, his patron. While he was in Paris, he had a psychic experience. Aubrey states that Donne told Sir Robert: "I have seen a dreadful vision since I saw you: I have seen my dear wife pass twice by me through this room with her hair hanging about her shoulders, and a dead child in her arms." Sir Robert told him he had been dreaming, but as Donne persisted in his belief that he had indeed seen a vision, sent a messenger to London to find out how Anne Donne was. The messenger returned to say: "He found and left Mrs Donne very sad, sick in her bed, and that, after a long and dangerous labour, she had been delivered of a dead child." When the late 19th-century Cambridge psychical researchers came to catalogue the sightings of ghosts, they found that similar reports of phantoms of the living were not uncommon.

Aubrey also records phantoms of the dying or recently dead. "In James Street in Covent Garden did then lodge a gentlewoman, a handsome woman but common, who was Mr Mohun's sweetheart. Mr Mohun was murdered [at Ebury Farm] about 10 in the morning; and at that very time, his mistress being in bed, saw Mr Mohun come to her bedside, draw the curtain, look upon her and go away. She called after him, but no answer. She knocked for her maid, asked her for Mr Mohun; she said she did not see him, and had the key of her chamber door in her pocket."

No doubt any author who becomes interested in parapsychology will sometimes prove credulous; one has only to think of Conan Doyle and the forged photographs of fairies. Yet Aubrey's combination of an interest in all the quirks of human psychology with a belief in the paranormal makes him hard to put down. There is also the style. If one reads the brief sentence which starts the Mohun story from "In James Street" to "sweetheart", one has the opening of a perfect storyteller. Has the word "sweetheart" ever been better placed to heighten the ending of a simple sentence?

At first sight Aubrey may seem an almost medieval figure; even his contemporaries thought his credulity old-fashioned. I have a copy of the second edition of the *Miscellanies*, 1721. Against one of his stories, an early 18th-century hand has written in exasperation: "A great fool, a lamentable fool." Yet both Pepys and Boswell had a foolish side to their characters. The judgment of the *Biographia Britannica*, 1747, is more charitable: "He was a man of good natural parts, much learning, and indefatigable application, a great lover of and diligent searcher into antiquities, a good Latin poet, an excellent naturalist, but withall somewhat credulous." Aubrey was also a close lifelong friend of the great philosopher Thomas Hobbes, throughout whose life he collected more substantial material than for his other brief biographies.

His great virtue for us, which he shares with Samuel Pepys, is that he talks our language. When one compares him to John Milton, who was only 16 years older, one can relate to Aubrey as though he were a contemporary. Milton is far less accessible to the modern imagination. Who would not love the man who could write this paragraph: "Arise Evans had a fungous nose, and said it was revealed to him, that the King's hand would cure him: and at the first coming of King Charles II into St James's Park he kissed the King's hand and rubbed his nose with it; which disturbed the King, but cured him. Mr Ashmole told it me."

THE TIMES DIARY

Pudding's off

HELP OF a sort is at hand for those corpulent souls who overdid their Christmas stuffing. After the terrifying success of Lord Lawson of Blaby's diet and the follow-up book, his wife Thérèse is being pursued to write her side of the story: a cookery book for weight-watchers.

Should you wish to take up its recipes and take on the appearance of "lanky" Lawson, a less cuddly soul than the wholesome Chancellor we knew of old, there will have to be sacrifices.

No pud: the slimline Lawsons

Thérèse said on Christmas Eve: "I am thinking about writing a cookbook — it's just that I have a good deal of other recipes. I do not think that I could cook anything other than in a low-fat way. I could not cook nursery suet puddings, for instance. We're having a low-fat turkey cooked in sesame oil. There is Christmas pudding but we also have a nice low-fat fruity alternative."

However, for those for whom Christmas is unthinkable without at least one mouthful of sin, there is solace. Lord Lawson is allowed to indulge his passion for Stilton, a favourite banned when he first started his regime but permissible on the maintenance diet. Think of him glancing forlornly at the butter dish, however. Thérèse has banned him from approaching it.

● *After months of unemployment, an actor friend suddenly found himself with a job. Several auditions had resulted in him being cast as a mugger for one of the BBC's reconstructions on* Crimewatch. *For days there was fizzy wine and celebration all round as he and his friends toasted his sudden rise from the couch. A few days later, however, he was found slumped in the corner of a pub, a cigarette drooping sadly from his mouth. "What's wrong? Didn't you go on* Crimewatch*?" he was asked. "No," he said bitterly. "They caught the so-and-so."*

Stoned

SUCKING up to the Pope simply does not work, as the Freemasons have just discovered. They offered him their Order of Galilee award for his "continual and meritorious" work towards international understanding and friendship. He told them where to go. At the back of his mind was doubtless the series of events in the late 1970s and early 1980s when the Vatican was found to be intimately involved with the sinister P2 Masonic lodge in Italy and the financial scandals surrounding the collapse of Banco Ambrosiana.

"The Pope does not as a rule accept honours and prizes," said the Vatican. That Roman Catholics are banned from joining the Masons — whom they regard as a weird secret society — did not help, either.

Short fuse

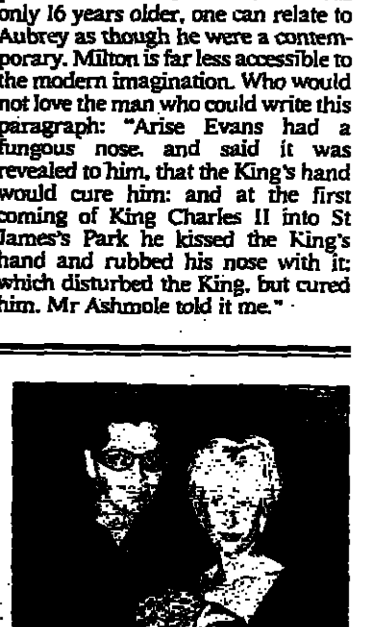
PHYSICISTS at New College in Oxford have been applying themselves to some advanced electrical engineering, courtesy of the ancient circuitry in their rooms. It was installed some years ago by a bursar who was anxious to cut down on heating bills in the fellows' rooms. Dr Joshua Silver, an atomic physicist at the college, explains the difficulty in layman's terms: "The rooms are fitted with a restrictor which means the system overloads if you plug in more than one electric fire." When Silver tried offering his entrance candidates a cup of tea at interviews earlier this year, the result was chaos, since boiling a kettle trips the fuses unless the electric fire is turned off in advance.

"I spent half the interviews on a rickety chair fiddling with the fusebox," says Silver. "It was a good test for the candidates. It didn't take the sharper ones long to work out that it was a straight choice between the fire and the kettle."

● *Bar wit from PHS's favourite wig. Judge Barrington Black. Sitting in Harrow Crown Court the other day, he was confronted by a man who pleaded guilty to two charges of robbery. After his first offence, he had been granted bail by the magistrates. Unluckily for him, however, two days later he burgled again and dropped his bail form, complete with his name and address, at the crime scene. Jailing him for four years, Judge Black said: "It would save the courts an awful lot of time if every defendant left his visiting card."*

Off the road

THERE is increasing concern among ponytails at the record company Polygram over the future of Paula Yates's amour, the singer Michael Hutchence, who is soon to appear in court facing charges of opium possession. If found guilty, he will not be able to go on a planned tour of America to promote his new record.


Hutchence with Yates

According to sources within the company, Hutchence and his band, INXS, were paid several millions in advance rather then on delivery of their new record. Polygram has been issuing profit warnings already this year, so if a Hutchence conviction means no tour, the wasted millions would be particularly bad news. "Michael is very excited about the new album," says his manager, Paul Craig, "and is currently putting together his US tour strategy." He then adds intriguingly: "No money has changed hands for the tour."

P·H·S

BETWEEN FOX AND HOUND

A modest proposal for compromise in the countryside

Boxing Day, as much as Christmas, depends upon traditions for its charm. The football derby and the charitable visit are uncontentious complements to the spiritual and sensual pleasures of Christmas Day itself. But one of the most vivid of today's traditions could be extinguished by this time next year. At more than 200 places around the country this morning fox-hunters will gather for their traditional Boxing Day meets. If Labour wins the general election it is committed to a free vote on hunting with hounds and the Commons arithmetic in the event of a Labour victory would make a ban almost inevitable. The distaste many feel for a sport which they believe veils real cruelty with genteel civilities is understandable. Legislation to ban hunting is not, however, the most appropriate way to guarantee the welfare of the countryside.

Some defenders of country sports can alienate the detached observer with an enthusiasm for the chase which seems to verge on the feral. There are occasions where huntsmen do not behave in a manner either wholly seemly or restrained and the use of terriers, in particular, requires careful policing. Outside traditional hunting areas public support for the sport is thin. A blanket ban, however, would be a clumsy gesture, however well-intentioned. It would deprive a significant section of the population of enjoyment and employment with no certainty of lessening any cruelty towards foxes.

Those with the best interests of the countryside at heart should be exploring how public concerns about hunting might be addressed without criminalising a peaceable minority. Progress of this kind has, unfortunately, been obstructed by the narrowness of the position adopted by some of the most vigorous opponents of hunting, not least the League against Cruel Sports. Four former senior members of the league, including two past chairmen, recently left the organisation in despair at its inflexible attitude. They have established a new grouping, the Wildlife Network, designed to bring together those opposed to animal cruelty and keen to establish a reasonable dialogue with supporters of hunting.

The Wildlife Network believe that an end to traditional fox-hunting would ensure neither longer lives nor easier deaths for rural foxes. Farmers do not allow hunts over their land out of sentiment but because they want a predator who deprives them of livestock and income to be pursued. If hunting ends, then farmers will still want to protect their sheep and chickens.

Members of the Wildlife Network fear that, without hunting, many farmers might be tempted into trying to control the fox population by shooting, snaring or illegal gassing. Hunting is a more humane method of controlling foxes, and it could be made more acceptable with effective regulation. Hunters, aware of the level of opposition to their sport, should co-operate with those who wish to see it continue, but controlled.

The Countryside Movement, an all-party body chaired by Sir David Steel, is currently holding an inquiry into the ethics and effectiveness of fox-hunting and is due to report in March. It would be unwise to pre-empt all the report's recommendations, but the preparedness of the former anti-hunting activists of the Wildlife Network to concede the case for hunting's survival tallies with the conclusions of many independent figures who have examined the evidence. In a country increasingly estranged from its rural roots, an open mind and tolerant disposition towards the settled habits of the countryside are the least one should expect from enlightened legislators.

A VERY ENGLISH ROMAN

Two thousand years ago: Seneca the Younger was born in 3BC

Lucius Annaeus Seneca, the Younger, was born at Corduba, the modern Córdoba, in southern Spain 2,000 years ago. That sentence might stand as a paradigm for an entry in a reference book. But what possible relevance can it have for a daily newspaper today? What is Seneca to us, or we to Seneca?

Even for classical scholars, Seneca comes from the silver not the golden age. His works are not mainstream. His grotesque and gory tragedies influenced the genre of blood-and-thunder melodrama that is still popular on the screen. But, compared with both life and entertainment in the late 20th century, they no longer seem as extravagant, shocking or incredible as they once did.

Seneca can be criticised for hypocrisy. He always has been. He was an original fat cat who preached the unimportance of wealth. He never gave up his own vast wealth until it was extracted from him. And he was also a versatile scribbler who served one of Rome's very worst tyrants.

The reason that Seneca is still relevant to politics today is because he was an early spin doctor lurking in the arras behind his ruler. He was an intellectual who adventured into politics in order to change the world. As Nero's "tutor", for a short period he became a master of the universe. He understood human nature in that harsh empire, and after Boadicea's rebellion persuaded his Emperor to adopt a policy of appeasement towards the British rather than reprisal. For a time he persuaded his golden boy to adopt humane manifestos and even decent policies. He wrote cautiously liberal speeches and soundbites for his master. His Stoic philosophy seemed so attractive that the Christians made up a legend that he knew St Paul. But all political careers must come to dust. That gloomy axiom applies particularly to intellectuals who sleepwalk into politics, from Socrates and Francis Bacon to Adlai Stevenson and Keith Joseph.

In Seneca's case his defeat was, fittingly, a bloody tragedy. Tacitus gives a vivid account of how Seneca was ordered to open his veins, which bled inadequately because he was so old. His State suicide was histrionically modelled on that of Socrates. And he seems to have been at the very least a tolerable old Roman husband, for his young wife followed suit. Tacitus found the whole business a bit too much, and preferred the sarcastic death of Petronius, raging against his demon Emperor.

Seneca was a bit of a fraud. He professed high moral standards while condoning (and even assisting) Nero's crimes, which included murder and matricide. He flattered those in power and was an expert at lobby intrigue and the old-boy-network. He was a high player in a regime that became monstrous. And he paid the price.

But Seneca's career was also an example of how the intellectual should engage in politics. For his teaching was more complex than it has been presented by angry puritans. He advocated giving honest advice to his masters while avoiding offence and provocation. He had a sympathy for underdogs and human weakness. He was aware of how hard it is to be good. He was not a model of virtue. But he was more honest about his failings than modern intellectuals and an encouragement to frail human beings. Let him stand for an early endearing example of British pragmatism in philosophy and politics. Politics still needs its intellectuals as well as its fixers.

NEPTUNE'S BIG SECRET

Man is a sucker for the unknown

Humanity's thirst to explore new worlds can blind it to the wonders of the old. The possibility of life on other planets has bewitched scientists this year, but almost more intriguing, and certainly worthier of study, are the mysterious life-forms which share our world but have, so far, eluded our attention. The most compelling of these creatures is the giant squid, a native of New Zealand which has never been seen alive but whose 60-foot long cadaver has been washed up on antipodean shores. The cephalopod's South Seas seclusion may end next year when an American expedition hopes to track it to its lair. With so much ingenuity having been lavished on investigating life on the planet Mars it is reassuring to know that there is still an appetite for exploring life in the realm of Neptune.

Science knows little of the giant squid, *architeuthis*. Its behaviour, breeding, feeding and swimming habits are a mystery. The scientist, Clyde Roper, who hopes to shine new light on the life of the reclusive mollusc believes he will encounter it hundreds of leagues under the sea but is unsure quite how low he will have to go before his camera lens encounters the foot-wide eyes of the "sepia octopus".

Art, however, has rescued the giant squid from its hermitage and made it our familiar. The squid has been immortalised in ink. Old literary salts from Homer through Melville to the basking shark of the bestseller lists, Peter Benchley, have tantalised their readers with tentacled leviathans. Tennyson was captivated by the Kraken, a giant squid which rests on the ocean bottom until, roused by the fires of hell, it rises to the surface and dies. The dweller "in the abysmal sea" with "unnumbered polypi" of which Tennyson wrote was a Nordic myth.

The Lincolnshire laureate was inspired by tales from Scandinavia. The first sighting of the Kraken was reported by the Swedish Bishop Olaus Magnus in 1555. The squid, like its briny cousin the siren, won its prey by deceit. Magnus described the Kraken's skin as so like gravel on the seashore as to tempt men on to what they imagined to be an island. Then, as they roasted their victuals on its back they, in turn, became supper themselves. The Kraken could, however, like all Creation, be tamed by divine intervention. In 1700 a Danish priest, Bartholimus, survived an hour on the Kraken's back by celebrating Mass.

The giant squid which inhabits the South Pacific appears, on the available evidence, to be altogether less aggressive than its mythical Norse relative. More preyed upon than preying, its beaks are regularly found in the stomachs of sperm whales. The pursuit of a sperm whale in *Moby Dick* provided the modern novel with its Grail quest and the search for the giant squid provides science at the end of the millennium with its most appropriate quarry — the pursuit of the last great living creature to evade man's eye.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

1 Pennington Street, London E1 9XN Telephone 0171-782 5000

Duke's right to speak on gun law

From Lord St John of Fawsley

Sir, Any encounter with Lord Wyatt of Weeford, either public or private, is an exhilarating and unpredictable experience. I little expected when we exchanged a few words on a television programme last week, on the Duke of Edinburgh's contribution to the gun-law debate, that I would find myself in a starring role in Lord Wyatt's always stimulating reflections in *The Times* (article, December 24).

I am the last person to want to prolong this tiresome controversy, but Lord Wyatt has not got what I said or the constitutional implications of the matter quite right.

My view is that Prince Philip has an indefeasible right to make his views known in any manner he pleases but that it would have been better on such a complex issue for them to have been set out in a measured speech in the House of Lords, of which he is a distinguished member, rather than in a dread soundbite which could be and was sensationalised and misrepresented.

Such a course would have been constitutionally correct. The convention is not as Lord Wyatt appears to think that Prince Philip should not speak on political questions, but that he should not take sides in matters of party politics. The gun-law debate is one in which the parties are in broad agreement and opinion is divided in a cross-bench way. It would thus be wholly proper constitutionally for the Duke to set out the issue in a non-partisan way in the Lords.

Lord Wyatt thinks the Duke is freer to speak because he has not been granted the title of Prince Consort but this has nothing to do with the matter as that title is exclusively honorific and carries no constitutional implications.

I remain, Sir, your obedient servant,
ST JOHN OF FAWSLEY,
House of Lords.
December 24.

Divided parties

From Mr Julian Grainger

Sir, Robert Worcester of MORI (reports, December 13) repeats the assertion often made by political leaders and commentators that "Voters react strongly against divided parties".

His evidence is that of those questioned on the image of the parties two months ago: 43 per cent described the Conservatives as "divided" as compared with 14 per cent in September 1991. Similar polls have noted similar observations by the electorate.

The trouble is that none of the polls ever seems to test the *importance* of "division" by asking whether it actually matters to the average voter. In my experience as a political canvasser over many years, few (if any) people mention party divisions over issues such as law and order, taxes or Europe.

Party leaders do democracy a disservice by trying to preserve an artificial unity. If the result is an impression that politicians say one thing in public and another in private, then perhaps it is not surprising that the electorate hold them in such low esteem.

It is sometimes argued that Labour's heavy defeat in 1983 was due to their public divisions over disarmament. Perhaps it was actually the official policy of unilateralism that was unpopular. Similarly, perhaps the Conservatives' present problems stem from their official policy on Europe rather than "divisions".

Party unity is not credible in the eyes of many voters. Efforts by party leaderships to stifle dissenting backbenchers who reflect genuine concerns may eventually prove counterproductive.

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN GRAINGER,
30 Homestead Road,
Chelsfield, Orpington, Kent.
December 14.

Mind over matter

From Mrs Heather Edwards

Sir, I find it extremely hard to believe that my late husband, Dr Harold Edwards, would have ever deliberately driven over a motorcycle parked in his parking space (letter, December 19). He had far too high a regard for the precision of machinery, including motorcycles, having owned one in his youth.

More likely is that he was rather a small man in a very large car and simply did not see it, whatever the views of the students afterwards.

Yours faithfully,
HEATHER EDWARDS,
Cardinal House,
The Green, Hampton Court, Surrey.
December 20.

Millennial values

From Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Holt

Sir, Anno Domini 2000. Seven hundred million pounds to be spent on an exhibition? Bearing in mind the fact that Our Lord was born in a stable, would it not be more appropriate to use this sum on housing several thousand homeless families?

Just a Christmas thought.

Yours sincerely,
ELIZABETH HOLT,
Orleton Hall,
Wellington, Telford, Shropshire.
December 22.

Gorbachev, Pravda and The Times

From the Chairman of Doubleday

Sir, I am happy to correct the misleading impression given by an unfortunate error in our English-language edition of Mikhail Gorbachev's *Memoirs*.

In a letter published in *The Times* on November 2 (see also letter, November 14) Professor Norman Davies drew attention to a misleading picture caption in that book which, he believed, showed that, deliberately or otherwise, Mr Gorbachev had confused the village of Khatyn, in Belarus, where Soviet citizens were executed by the occupying German forces between 1941 and 1944, with Katyn, near Smolensk in Russia, the site of the secret murder of thousands of Polish officers by the Soviet NKVD in 1940.

Professor Davies's point has since been picked up by *Pravda*, which published an article on December 10, entitled "So Khatyn or Katyn?" and subtitled "British historians are amazed at the confusion in the *Memoirs* of Mikhail Gorbachev". The article concludes: "*If this kind of confusion is, as you can see, deeply rooted in the Soviet Union's establishment, then can we be quite sure of some officials in the present Kremlin administration?*"

Both Professor Davies's letter and the *Pravda* article are based on the same false assumption. The misleading caption arose from a correction made in proof by one of our former staff, which was not seen either by Mr Gorbachev or his advisers. We take full responsibility for this mistake, which will of course be corrected in all future editions.

Far from being guilty of disinformation, Mr Gorbachev deserves credit as the first Russian leader to acknowledge Soviet responsibility for the Katyn massacres. Indeed, his memoirs tackle this issue head-on (pp 480-481).

Not the least of Mr Gorbachev's achievements as leader of his great country was to introduce glasnost, enabling painful episodes such as Katyn or the Soviet-German pact to be discussed openly within the nations of the former Soviet Union for the first time.

Yours faithfully,
STEPHEN RUBIN,
Chairman, Doubleday,
61-63 Uxbridge Road, W5.
December 20.

Preserving Sunday as a day of rest

From Mr David Hallam, MEP for Shropshire, Herefordshire and Wyre Forest (Socialist Group (Labour))

Sir, Earlier this month the European Parliament passed a declaration recognising the special character of Sunday. The issue arose because the European Court of Justice had agreed with the British Government that Sunday should have no special status in the implementation of the working-time directive.

The declaration had the support of most political parties within the Parliament — Socialists, Christian Democrats, Gaullists, Greens and Communists. It acknowledged the special position of people of other faiths.

Throughout Europe there is growing disquiet at the erosion of Sunday as a day of rest, worship and tranquillity. What we now see in every high street and shopping mall in England is being repeated in many other European towns and cities. Those denied Sunday lunch with their families are nearly always low-paid and obliged to work long hours to make a living.

It is time for the citizens of Europe to reclaim their Sundays from the global marketplace. The European Parliament has recognised the strength of this grassroots yearning.

Yours,
DAVID HALLAM,
European Parliament,
97 Rue Belliard, 1040 Brussels.
December 20.

On the 'Alpha' course

From Dr Ruth J. Boaden

Sir, As someone who has been involved in several "Alpha" courses within my local church, I was interested to read of Dominic Kennedy's experiences (Weekend, December 14). The emphasis on "miracles, healing, prophecy" which was made by the curate, Nicky Gumbel, is not necessarily the only slant on the material produced by Holy Trinity Brompton (HTB).

In our courses we have found the intellectual rigour of the material — in terms of presentation and structure — to be a key feature. Many of those who have participated have grown to understand more about Christianity, even if they have not "become Christians" by the end of the course.

Our discussions have been more of the "Why does the Bible say this?", "Isn't Christianity arrogant?" variety than an evangelical form of "group therapy". I believe strongly that Christianity does stand up to intellectual scrutiny and, as a Christian for a number of years, Alpha has helped me to renew that understanding.

Alpha is not simply about supernatural signs and wonders: we have seen very few "quivers, jerks, babbles" but many people I know have deepened their understanding and experience; some have come to know God for the first time.

Many of us have lives where we believe that we see God at work without such obvious (and potentially disturbing) supernatural signs. If Dominic Kennedy viewed the course more as a way to introduce people to a relationship with a living God rather than a series of coincidences, he might have got to the heart of the success of the Alpha "formula".

Yours,
RUTH J. BOADEN,
30 Marlborough Close,
Ramsbottom, Bury, Lancashire.
December 18.

An open society

From Mrs T. S. Woolsey-Brown

Sir, As the wife of a Freemason I welcome calls for Freemasons to be encouraged to state their membership publicly (report, December 17). I find it very discouraging that, although there may be no official reason for secrecy, a myth has grown around the organisation, leading many people, including my own family, to be wary of Freemasons.

However, I am sad that so much publicity has arisen as a result of women barristers feeling hard done by. Surely there should be a general move from us all towards encouraging openness within the "brotherhood".

This, I am sure, would be a benefit. For a start perhaps Freemasons could be encouraged to wear a lodge tie.

Yours sincerely,
TAMSIN WOOLSEY-BROWN,
1 Broom Close,
Bracondale, Norwich, Norfolk.
December 17.

From His Honour Alan King-Hamilton, QC

Sir, In your report of December 17, entitled "Freemason judges 'should resign or admit status'", my name appears in a list of judges and former judges who are Freemasons.

That fact was as utterly and completely irrelevant to the discharge of my judicial duties as was my membership of the MCC and the RAF Club.

Even if it had come to my knowledge (most unlikely, and never did) that a defendant or witness was a Freemason it wouldn't have made the slightest difference to my approach to the case; the judicial oath and the Freemasons' obligation are not inconsistent with each other. On the contrary, they are complementary.

It is time to cease this intrusion into whether or not judges — or anyone else — are members of a lawful organisation.

Yours faithfully,
ALAN KING-HAMILTON,
Royal Air Force Club,
128 Piccadilly, W1.

Children's diseases

From Mrs Kate Wall

Sir, My Christmas wish comes true. I plant a kiss — for me and thousands of parents — on the reporter who wrote the magic words metabolic disorder under the angelic picture of six-year-old Sian Gorvett in Guy's Hospital (December 16).

Research shows that more children die of inherited genetic diseases, of which a major component is metabolic diseases, than die of childhood cancers. Three quarters of these diseases lead to degeneration and an early death, as seen in Tay Sachs or Battens disease.

Congratulations must go to the families of these children who work such long and stressful hours just caring and nursing. I am a member of RTMDC (Research Trust for Metabolic Diseases in Children) and we have been knocking at the closed door of the press for years trying to raise the awareness of the families' plight.

Yours faithfully,
KATE WALL,
9 Southlands Drive,
Timsbury, nr Bath.

Cultural diet

From Professor Peter Curwen

Sir, Any residual suspicion that Swedes lack a sense of humour has finally been eliminated. According to your report (December 20):

> People who regularly visit theatres, cinemas or concerts live longer than those who do not, according to Swedish researchers. They believe that cultural stimulation may boost the immune system.

Although tempted to rush off and book a seat at the pantomine, I wonder whether "culture vultures" are simply able to afford healthier lifestyles.

Yours faithfully,
PETER CURWEN,
Sheffield Hallam University,
Sheffield Business School,
City Campus, Unit 7,
Sheffield Science Park, S1 2LX.
December 22.

Sport letters, page 31

Letters for publication may be faxed to 0171-782 5046.

Help for children who can't conform

From the Head of the Thomas Coram Adoption Service

Sir, In recent months this service, which for the past 20 years has placed children in care with adoptive families and supervised their placements, has become aware of an alarming trend. Increasingly we find that there is less flexibility in schools about meeting the needs of children who are unable to conform to the schools' expectations, and that children we have placed are therefore being excluded.

In our experience many children who behave in an unruly way in school come from very troubled families and have not enjoyed the normal socialising effects of a settled home life; it is not surprising that they find it difficult to cope with the pressures of school.

It is no solution to blame these children. They need a thorough assessment of their educational and emotional needs so that appropriate help can be offered both by the education authority and by other relevant services, such as community mental-health teams. The price for failing to provide them with such help is that they will become the dropouts and dysfunctional adolescents and adults of the next generation.

Policymakers from central government down are quick to want to punish children and young people who transgress, rather than seek to understand the underlying causes of their difficulties. For the media as well, it is easier to blame and label them than to take a lead in analysing what has gone wrong.

Yours sincerely,
JEANNE KANIUK,
Head of Adoption Service,
Thomas Coram Foundation
for Children,
40 Brunswick Square, WC1.
December 23.

Royal succession

From Mr Tony Batcheler

Sir, Thomas Braun (letter, December 20) comments that had Lord Archer's proposed rules for the royal succession been in force, Kaiser Wilhelm II would have succeeded to the British throne. Since that might have avoided the First World War, the Russian Revolution, Hitler, the Second World War, the genocide of European Jews and the Cold War, perhaps the proposal does have some merit after all.

Yours faithfully,
A. C. BATCHELER,
South Pines,
Forest Drive, Kingswood, Surrey.
December 21.

Future bombers

From Captain J. P. Speller, RN (retd)

Sir, I read your article on the "uninhabited" bomber "flown by a crew sitting at a desk back in the office" (report, December 17) and the £35 million to be spent on "researching options" with growing incredulity.

My understanding is that the uninhabited bomber already exists; it is called a cruise missile and it is launched by a variety of platforms, but with particular effectiveness by crew sitting at desks in submarines and ships.

Yours faithfully,
J. P. SPELLER,
Coram House, Sandpit Lane,
Bledlow, Buckinghamshire.

The polly and the ivy

From Professor Roy Gregory

Sir, I hope your correspondent who was eyeing parrots in a Macclesfield pet shop as an alternative to frozen turkeys (December 18) will have avoided the indigenous Australian variety.

According to the late Alan Moorehead, the recipe for cooking "the beautiful galah" is said to be as follows: "You boil it with an old boot and when the old boot is tender you throw the galah away and eat the boot" (*Cooper's Creek*, Penguin Books, 1963, p72 footnote).

Yours faithfully,
ROY GREGORY,
University of Reading,
Centre for Ombudsman Studies,
Department of Politics,
Whiteknights, Reading RG6 6AA.
December 19.

Lost in translation?

From Mr Christopher Stoddart

Sir, Sadly I have to report that, even in the world of bicycling, European cultural integration is a few kilometres short of perfect.

I have just bought a new cycle lock and have dutifully studied the instructions in French and English. The final piece of advice reads: "*Cet antivol est fourni avec 3 clés. Assurez-vous d'en donner une à une autre personne.*" In English: "We supplied three keys. Please give one to your mother in case you lose the other two."

There are no instructions in German, probably because Germans do not lose two out of three keys.

Yours,
CHRISTOPHER STODDART
(Managing Director), GMTV,
The London Television Centre,
Upper Ground, SE1.
December 23

هكذا في الاصل

COURT CIRCULAR

SANDRINGHAM
NORFOLK

December 24: The Hon Mary Morrison has succeeded the Lady Elton as Lady in Waiting to The Queen.

SANDRINGHAM
NORFOLK

December 25: Divine Service was held in Sandringham Parish Church this morning.

Birthdays today

Professor D.H. Barlow, obstetrician and gynaecologist, 47; Captain George W. Burnet, Lord-Lieutenant of Midlothian, 69; Professor Sir Colin Campbell, Vice-Chancellor, Nottingham University, 52; Sir Alastair Dunnett, former chairman, Thomson Scottish Petroleum, 88; Sir Christopher Hewetson, former President, Law Society, 67; Mr Rohan Kanhai, cricketer, 61; Mr Eric Kinder, chairman, Smith and Nephew, 69; Professor Thea King, clarinettist, 71; Miss Jane Lapotaire, actress, 52; Mr David Perry, chairman, John Waddington, 59; Mr Denis Quilley, actor, 69; Mr Mark Robinson, MP, 50; Miss Anna Scher, founder, Anna Scher Theatre, 52.

Marriage

**Mr T. Plumpton
and Miss M.D. Clark**

The marriage took place on Christmas Eve, at City Hall, New York, of Mr Terry Plumpton, only son of Mr and Mrs F.W. Plumpton, of Morden, Surrey, to Miss Melanie Dawn Clark, only daughter of the late Mr G.L. Clark and of Mrs M.J. Clark, of Selsdon, Surrey.

They were attended by their children, Ashley and Brook Plumpton.

Appointment

Sir William (Liam) McCollum, QC, 63, the most senior of the judges of the High Court of Northern Ireland, has been appointed a Lord Justice of Appeal in Northern Ireland from January 8. He succeeds Sir Robert Carswell, who is to become Lord Chief Justice of Northern Ireland on that day.

The vacancy in the High Court will be filled in the new year.

Anniversaries

BIRTHS: Thomas Gray, poet, London, 1716; Lord George Gordon, Protestant agitator, London, 1751; Charles Babbage, pioneer of calculating machines, Totnes, 1792; Dion Boucicault, actor and dramatist, Dublin, 1822; Henry Miller, novelist, New York, 1891; Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the People's Republic of China 1949-59, Shaoshan, Hunan Province, 1893; Victor Hely-Hutchinson, composer, Cape Town, 1901.

DEATHS: Claude Helvetius, philosopher, Voré, 1771; John Fothergill, physician, London, 1780; John Wilkes, political reformer, London, 1797; Heinrich Schliemann, archaeologist, Naples, 1890; Roger Keyes, Baron Keyes, Admiral of the Fleet, Buckingham, 1945; James Stephens, novelist and poet, London, 1950; Harry S. Truman, 33rd American President 1945-53, Kansas City, 1972; Sir Lennox Berkeley, composer, 1989.

Marie and Pierre Curie discovered radium while experimenting with pitchblende, 1898.

The German battleship *Scharnhorst* was sunk by the Royal Navy, 1943.

University news

Ulster

Dr B. Graham, School of Environmental Studies, has been appointed Professor of Human Geography.

Mr H. McMahon, head of the School of Education, has been appointed Professor of Education.

Let the new year hold no terrors for us

☐ The Queen, in her Christmas message, offered Christian comfort to those who have suffered. But she recalled particularly the state visit of Nelson Mandela, "that most gracious of men". This is the full text

To look back is not necessarily to be nostalgic. When I come to Sandringham each year, I like to reflect on what Christmas must have been like when King Edward VII, my great grandfather, and Queen Alexandra first came here as young parents. I remember my own childhood Christmases here, with my father and mother, and a great family gathering, and now I delight in seeing my children and grandchildren enjoying the same traditions.

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of the founder of the Christian faith, an event which took place almost 2,000 years ago; every year, at this time, we are asked to look back at that extraordinary story and remind ourselves of the message which inspired Christ's followers then, and which is just as relevant today.

At Christmas I enjoy looking back on some of the events of the year. Many have their roots in history but still have a real point for us today. I recall, especially, a dazzling spring day in Norwich when I attended the Maundy Service, the cathedral providing a spectacular setting. The lovely service is always a reminder of Christ's words to His disciples: "Love one another; as I have loved you." It sounds so simple, yet it proves so hard to obey.

In June came Trooping the Colour, a vivid reminder of this country's proud military tradition and of the discipline and dedication which our servicemen and women show in their taxing tasks of peacekeeping in many distant parts of the world.

Then, in October, I opened Parliament. This is not just a state occasion, but is also symbolic of the process of parliamentary democracy which we enjoy here in Britain and in so many countries of the Commonwealth. It is a process which seeks to express the ideal of the equality of all citizens under the law.

So, the past, with its traditions, has its lessons for us in 1996. This year, in our travels, Prince Philip and I have also been looking to the future. I and all my family have always felt that one of our most important duties is to express, in our visits overseas, the goodwill of our country towards friends abroad, near and far.

So, last spring, we visited Poland and the Czech Republic, where we saw the development of democracy and prosperity in countries which only recently were communist-governed. And everywhere we received the best of welcomes.

In the autumn we went to Thailand, where we renewed old friendships and witnessed the blending of tradition with a dynamic commercial spirit.

There was also a happy visit to this country by the President of France. And I shall never forget the state visit of President Mandela. That most gracious of men has shown us all how to accept the facts of the past without bitterness, how to see new opportunities as more important than old disputes and how to look forward with courage and optimism. His example is a continuing inspiration to the whole Commonwealth and to all those everywhere who work for peace and reconciliation.

Each year brings its share of difficulties for many families. This year has, I know, been no exception. And during it some have suffered bereavement of a tragic and shocking kind. At such times, it is tempting for all of us, especially those who suffer, to look back and say "If only". But to look back in that way is to look down a blind alley. Better to look forward and say "If only". If only we can live up to the example of the child who was born at Christmas with a love that came to embrace the whole world.

If only we can let Him recapture for us that time when we face the future with childhood's unbounded faith. Armed with that faith, the new year, with all its challenges and chances, should hold no terrors for us, and we should be able to embark upon it undaunted.

My family joins me in wishing each one of you a very happy Christmas.

The Queen making her Christmas broadcast, which was recorded at Sandringham at the weekend

Sceptical Brits sent the legions packing

By Norman Hammond
Archaeology Correspondent

EURO-SCEPTICISM is nothing new, according to Dr Michael Jones. It was already rife 1,600 years ago, when Britain broke away from the Roman Empire.

The impression has been of a misty-eyed parting, as the legions withdrew to defend the core of the Empire, leaving the gallant Romanised British to defend their provincial civilisation against Germanic barbarians. But reality was harsher, Dr Jones says. The Britons got rid of their Roman overlords as soon as the latter weakened and there was a lack of mutual respect.

Dr Jones cites the 6th-century historian Zosimus, who records that, in the last of a succession of revolts, the Britons threw off Roman rule, expelled the Roman governor and set up their own administration. They subsequently lived "without submission to Roman rule". While Zosimus cannot always be believed, "in an important sense Roman Britain ended when the Britons no longer regarded themselves as Romans", Dr Jones says in *British Archaeology* this month.

The bad blood went back to the height of Roman power, when Carausius, Governor of Britain in the late 3rd century, declared himself emperor with local support. Thereafter, Britons "were regarded as treacherous and rebellious no-goods", Dr Jones says.

Typical are epigrams by Ausonius of Bordeaux, describing "a good Briton" as an impossibility — an attitude not unlike that of Ausonius's successors today. All classes seem to have been involved in the separation, the cultured elite as much as the peasantry.

The British author Gildas presents "a chilling view of Roman rule as typified by harsh servitude, exploitation and insecurity", Dr Jones says. This seems to have welded the fissiparous British tribes into some sort of unity and far from the end of Roman rule being the result of Anglo-Saxon invasions, as was once thought, "the destruction of Roman Britain was an inside job".

Campaigner plans 'green' burial site on daleside

By Paul Wilkinson

A CAMPAIGNER for "green" graves is setting up a burial site on the side of a Yorkshire dale, next to a beauty spot owned by the National Trust.

John Bradfield plans to put 20 graves in eight acres of woodland and pasture beside the trust's property at Brimham Rocks, part of a designated area of outstanding natural beauty in Nidderdale, North Yorkshire. The area is also a site of special scientific interest (SSSI). The 380 acres of Brimham Rocks, owned by the National Trust, are known for their monolithic outcrops of millstone grit, naturally shaped into strange forms.

Eventually the burial ground will be handed to the AB Wildlife Trust, which will run it as a nature reserve. The trust hopes to hear soon whether it has been successful in an attempt for £200,000 to administer the reserve. The grant would enable the trust to buy an adjacent cottage to use as a warden's home and to cover his costs.

Mr Bradfield, a social worker and environmentalist, has campaigned for many years for a change in public attitudes to death and grieving and, in particular, the idea of moving away from formal funerals and interments to a more natural return of the human body to the earth.

He said: "In green burials there are no formal ceremonies, no coffin is used and the grave is unmarked. The location of their burial is inside a nature reserve so that people chosing a green grave are aware that they are helping to nurture the wildlife around them."

The AB Wildlife Trust has already set up one green burial site, in a nature reserve on a wildflower meadow ten miles away, near Harrogate.

Mr Bradfield has obtained a declaration from planners at Harrogate council that the Brimham site does not require planning permission provided the number of burials is limited to 25. He has already named the site Kate's Fell, after Kate Davies, one of the country's first occupational therapists, who gave him many of the ideas he now espouses.

"This is a tremendous step forward for green graves," he said. "It shows that we can set up burial places in nature reserves without planning permission. Both the National Trust and English Nature, which administers the SSSIs, have given us their blessing."

The site, on a southerly slope overlooking Nidderdale, comprises woodland, pasture and rock outcrops, like the larger stones on the National Trust land. The wildlife trust will be planting native oaks, which once grew on the daleside, from acorns gathered locally.

The SSSI is protected for its geological value and the rare plants, including sundews, bog asphodel and cowberry. "There will be no indication from outside that the place is anything other than upland country," Mr Bradfield said. "It cannot be overlooked and the birch and rowan which are there already will screen it."

The legality of such burials has been a grey area for some time, but Mr Bradfield and his colleagues have achieved several landmark decisions in the past three years to seek clarification. There is no legal bar on the style of a green burial and planning permission is not required for an interment of up to two people in land they owned, including their own garden.

If the National Lottery does not provide help, Mr Bradfield hopes a benefactor will finance the long-term future of Kate's Fell. "We are not setting a standard fee for burial there, but we are letting people know it will cost far more than a normal funeral, several thousand pounds perhaps. But they know they are buying a grave in one of the most peaceful and pleasant locations in the country, which will contribute to the survival of the natural world."

Lottery fund rejects aid for Brontë birthplace

ADMIRERS of the Brontës are searching for a benefactor with £500,000 to give away after the lottery fund turned down a project to restore the family's birthplace (Paul Wilkinson writes).

They want to create a tourist and study centre at the stone-built cottage in Thornton, west Yorkshire, four miles from the family's much-better known home at Haworth Parsonage. Time is short as the present occupants have divided the cottage into two and put it up for sale as private homes.

The family lived at the Grade II listed cottage for five years before moving to Haworth in 1820. Charlotte, Branwell, Emily and Anne Brontë were all born there and baptised in the nearby chapel of St James where their father Patrick was the curate. The church is now in ruins.

Brontë Senior was later to write that the time spent at Thornton was the happiest in his life and it was there that his wife Maria did most of her writing.

The Heritage Lottery Fund rejected the Brontë Birthplace Trust's bid on the ground that access to the building would bring only minor benefits to the public's understanding of the family. Ruth Vincenzi of the trust said: "We and the people of Thornton are completely bemused. This is a place of obvious historical importance. The Brontë sisters would have seen their mother writing her pamphlets and it is there that they would have had their first experiences of such things."

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Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary, and bless the Lord. May the Lord, maker of heaven and earth, bless you from Zion. Psalm 134 : 2,3

BIRTHS

BETTS - On 21st December in Manchester to Debra and Martin, a son, Harri and a brother for Alice and Eleanor.

DRUITT - On 17th December, at the Portland Hospital, to Amanda and Jeremy, a son, Thomas Jack Oscar Wyard Topsfield.

HANCOCK - On December 19th at the Portland Hospital to Kate (née Gathauser) and Christopher a son George. A brother for William.

HITCHCOCK-MERRITT - At The Portland Hospital on 18th December to Christina and Lee, a son, Jake Albert, a beautiful brother for Louis.

JEWELL - On 16th December to Helen (née Dart) and Matthew, a daughter Olivia Ann.

LANDWEHR - On December 22nd at the Portland Hospital to Marina and Peter. Our beautiful son Marco is born.

LEACH-CLAY - To Richard Leach and Xanthe Clay on December 22nd, a son Hector John.

TOWNSON-HOPKINS - On 3rd of December in Southampton, To Robert and Margaret, a son, William Ian David.

DEATHS

ASHFIELD - On December the 23rd, in hospital, Marjorie, a loving mother, and grandmother. Service of Thanksgiving at St Michael's Church, Geldeston, Norfolk, on Monday December the 30th at 2.00pm. Family flowers only, but donations if desired for Geldeston and Broome Church funds. Please make all cheques payable to Harvey Bros Client's Charities account, Newgate, Kirby Cane, Bungay, Suffolk NR35 2PP.

BEAUCHAMP - On December 22nd, William Frederick of Newcastle. Widower of Mary (née Morrison), father of Sandra, father-in-law of David, grandfather of Richard and Rosalind. Friends please meet for Funeral Service at Doxford Place Methodist Church, Cramlington, Northumberland on Monday December 30th at 12 noon, followed by cremation at Cowpen Crematorium at 1pm. Family flowers only please. Donations in lieu may be sent for the Royal Masonic Benevolent Institution or the Royal Artillery Fund (Soldiers', Sailors' and Airmans' Families Association), c/o Melrose & Dennis Funeral Service, 159 Astley Road, Seaton Delaval, Whitley Bay, Tyne and Wear.

CORNWALL-LEGH - see Grey of Codnor.

CRACROFT-ELEY On Sunday 22nd December suddenly at home, Robin, dearly loved husband of Bridget and father of Annabel and William. Funeral private at Hackthorn Church and Service of Thanksgiving on Thursday 2nd January at 3 p.m. in Lincoln Cathedral. No flowers, donations to Hackthorn Church Fabric Fund c/o Colin Moore, Main Street, Hackthorn, Lincoln. LN2 3PW

DEED - Peacefully on December 20th, aged 84 years, Elizabeth Cornell Deed of Little Haven, Pembrokeshire, a much loved sister, teacher and friend. Funeral Service at All Saints Church, Walton West on January 2nd 1997 at 11.15am followed by cremation at Parc Gwyn Crematorium, Narberth at 12.30pm. Family flowers only, but donations for her favourite charities may be sent c/o Mr Gordon Blackburn, Dyffryn cefn Faes Farm, Tegryn, Llanfyrnach, Pembrokeshire, SA35 0DN.

EMPSON - Hetta. Died peacefully after a brief illness, on 22nd December. Cremation on Friday 10th January, at Golders Green (West Side) 2pm.

FOXTON - Major General Edwin Frederick Foxton (retired) of South Close, North Dalton, East Yorkshire. On the 23rd of December. Service and interment at North Dalton Church on Monday 30th December at 2pm.

GREY OF CODNOR - On December the 23d 1996, Charles Legh Shuldham Cornwall-Legh of High Legh, aged 93. Funeral private. Memorial service will be announced later.

GWILLIAM - Gillian Lesley, aged 62, passed away on Sunday, 22nd December at 6.30 am. Beloved wife of Russell, Mother of Lesley, Stephanie, Miles and Nigel, and Grandmother. How much she will be missed. Cremation at Croydon Crematorium at 3.30 pm on Tuesday, 31st December. Enquiries, flowers and /or donations to the Alzheimers Disease Society c/o JB Shakespeare, Funeral Directors, 67 George St, Croydon, CR0 1LD. (Tel. 0181 6881447).

HALL - On 22nd December 1996 peacefully in Devonshire Nursing Home, Barbara, wife of the late F.J.S. Hall. Funeral Service at Eastbourne crematorium family chapel on Monday 6th January at 2.15pm. Enquiries to Haine & son Ltd, 19 South Street, Eastbourne. Tel: 01323 727801.

HARRIS-MATTHEWS - Eileen (Toni), suddenly at home on 18th December, aged 79. Funeral at Croydon Crematorium, on Friday 3rd January at 1.30pm. No flowers, donations if desired to Royal Marsden Hospital (Sutton).

KEMMEY - On December 22nd 1996, peacefully in Leopold Nursing Home, in the hands of the very kind and caring staff, Gwendoline Emma, aged 86 years of Felixstowe. Dearly loved sister of Barbara. Funeral Service at St. Johns Church, Felixstowe on Tuesday, December 31st at 2pm. No flowers please, donations if desired made payable to R.N.L.I. may be sent c/o, Gordon Rodwell, Funeral Director, 79. St. Andrews Road, Felixstowe, Suffolk, IP11 7BW.

KINLOCH - Margaret, past away peacefully after a short illness, at the Mount Alvernia Hospital, Guildford, 22nd of December 1996. Funeral service is to take place on Monday 30th December at 4.00pm, at Guildford crematorium. Sadly missed by her husband Jim and all her many friends. All enquiries to Robert Ayling Funeral Services 01483 567333.

LEVETE - Sally, aged 60, on Sunday morning, 22nd December, very peacefully, calmly and gently, in St Joseph's hospice, Mare Street, London E8. Her life, like her voice, was soft and low, an excellent thing in a woman, but it reached out to touch the lives of countless others with tenderness, care and love. The funeral service, which will be quiet and for family and her closest friends, will be at 2.15pm on Tuesday 2nd January, at St Giles without Cripplegate, the Barbican church in Fore Street, London EC2. The service of Thanksgiving for her life will be at 4.30pm on Saturday, 15th February, also at St Giles, where all who come to this celebration will be properly refreshed afterwards. No flowers, by her request: donations in her memory to the Help the Hospices, 34 Britannia Street, London WC1X 9JG.

ON Thursday December 19th, John Elenor. Died peacefully at his home. He was an inspirational teacher of singing, a highly respected musician, and a loved and valued friend. His funeral service is at St. Anselm's & St. Cecelia's Church, Kingsway, at 9.15 am on Friday 27th December. No flowers, but donations to: I.S.M. Benevolent Fund.

PARKES - Nancy (Nan). Peacefully, on December 21st in Northwood, much loved and sadly missed by family and friends. Funeral service at Golders Green crematorium, Hoop Lane, Friday December 27th, at 2.30pm. No flowers please.

QVIST - Maisie on 20th December 1996 beloved wife of Alfred, step-mother of Anne and mother of Tom, Janet and Susan Tribe. Private family cremation; Service of Thanksgiving to be held at Parish Church of All Saints, Old Heathfield, East Sussex on Friday 3rd January at 2.15 pm. No flowers. Donations if desired to NSPCC, Loughton Branch, c/o Heathfield Funeral Service, Holmrook, Hailsham Road, Heathfield, East Sussex, TN21 8AE.

STEEL - William Fleming (Bill) died peacefully at home on the 20th December, aged 60, after a long strong battle with illness. He is sorely missed by his wife Carol, son Michael and daughter Carolanne, son-in-law James, granddaughters Lauren and Lindsey. May he live in the memories of all the people he has touched with the laughter and joy he has brought to one and all. The Funeral Service takes place on Friday 27th December, at the Surrey and Sussex Crematorium, Crawley at 3.15pm. Family flowers only but donations if desired for the British Heart Foundation, may be sent c/o Freeman Brothers, 9 North Parade, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 2BP. Tel: 01403 254590.

STOCKWELL, on 22 December, 1996, Evelyn Dorothy, wife of the late Colonel George Stockwell (late Seaforth Highlanders), mother of Gillian and Kirstine, Grandmother and Greatgrandmother. Funeral Service at St. Peter's Church, Dorchester on Monday 30th December at 12 noon. Enquiries to Grassby Funeral Service, 16 Princes Street, Dorchester. Tel: 01305 262338.

TAVENER - Charles Kenneth, on 21st December 1996. Funeral at 1pm on Monday 30th December, at St. Andrew's Frognal, Frognal Lane/Finchley Road, London NW3. Family flowers only. Donations to Marfan Trust, 9 Repton Road, Orpington, Kent, BR6 9HS.

TENNANT - Sir Peter C.M.G. O.B.E. On 22nd December 1996 peacefully at home. Much loved father of Frank, Lotta, Susy and Nicholas, also devoted grandfather and great-grandfather. Funeral service on Monday 30th of December at St Stephen's Church, Shottermill, Haslemere, Surrey at 2.15 pm. Family flowers only, enquiries regarding donations to C.M.Lough and Partners, 84 Lions Lane, Haslemere, Surrey. GU27 1JH or telephone 01428 643524.

WEBSTER - John Dudley died peacefully on Thursday, 19th December after a long battle, courageously fought. Greatly loved husband of Barbara and father of Katharine. Funeral to be held at St. Nicholas' Church, Manor Park Road, Chislehurst on Tuesday, 31st December. Family and friends. Service of thanksgiving in the City of London to be arranged at a later date. Flowers, or donations to the Imperial Cancer Research Fund and all enquiries to Francis Chappell and Sons Funeral Directors, 332 Crofton Road, Farnborough, Orpington, Kent, BR6 8NW.

WILLIAMS - On 23rd December 1996, Revd. Roger Arthur peacefully at home. Beloved husband of Molly, Father of Susan, Jeremy and Catherine and Grandfather. Funeral Service on 30th December 1996 at Broadclyst Parish Church at 12 noon followed by Cremation. Family flowers only, donations to Gracey Court.

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OBITUARIES

RONNIE SCOTT

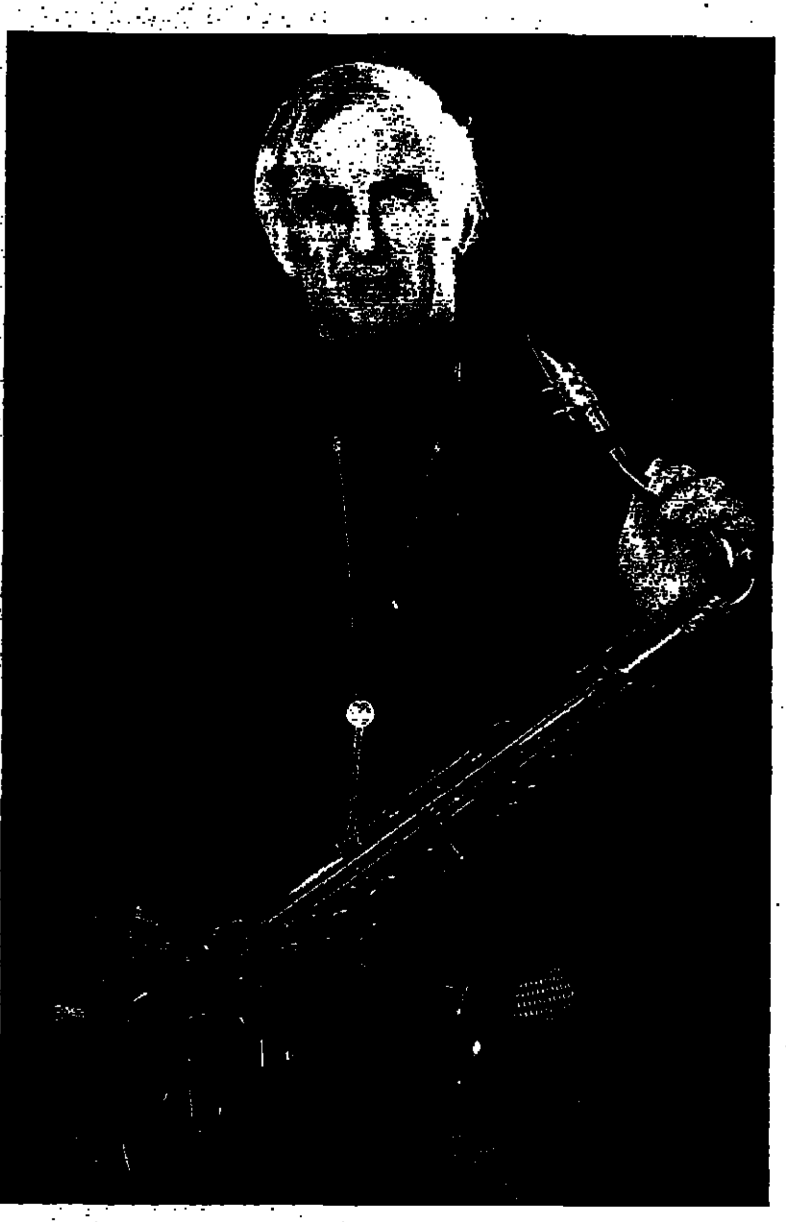
Ronnie Scott, jazz musician and nightclub owner, died on December 23 aged 69. He was born on January 28, 1927.

A laconic tenor saxophonist of suave appearance and mordant wit, Ronnie Scott was the founder of the legendary Soho night club which, for 37 years, formed the hub of the jazz musicians' world. The birthplace of British jazz, ever since its opening in the Sixties Ronnie Scott's has attracted the world's foremost jazz players. Pictures of Dizzy Gillespie, Coleman Hawkins, Stan Getz, Django Reinhardt, Art Blakey, Chet Baker and a collage of other stars, paper the walls behind the bar. All played in the club which, despite occasional financial crises, kept jazz alive in London and made it accessible, yet without ever destroying its elusive appeal.

A somnolent, smokey den with whitewashed walls and red vinyl padded bar, Ronnie Scott's has attracted generations of fans to its dimly lit tables to hear the masters of jazz playing — as they like to play best — in a relaxed, intimate setting. Scott himself, both as musician and sardonic master of ceremonies, was always there, *his dark clothes* offsetting *his* silvery hair, a cigarette or saxophone clamped in his letterbox mouth. He was infamous for his appalling jokes, but his quick repartee was nevertheless the bane of any inebriate foolish enough to cross swords with him.

Ronald Scott was born in the East End of London and raised in a terraced house in Petticoat Lane. His parents divorced when he was four years old and, without a father figure, he grew up coddled and cossetted by his Jewish mother and grandmother. As a baby he was chosen above all others in the East End Mothers' Maternity Home to be presented to the Prince of Wales on a royal visit and from then on, although the family were never rich, his mother made sure that he wanted for nothing. Unlike his playmates, he never had to make do with cobbled-together toys or turn to petty pilfering to get what he wanted. He was assured of shop-bought scooters or a ha'penny piece to go down to the shops. Even when as a young teenager he entertained the hare-brained scheme of stowing away on a boat and travelling to America, his mother indulged his whim, packing his bags for him. She knew her son would not even get near the vessels, patrolled by security guards.

Ronnie's single memory of his father, the saxophonist Jack Scott, was hazy. He recalled being taken to some restaurant in the West End where he was playing with Jack Hylton's band. "I heard him ask my mother to give him one more chance. She refused." But though it was to be 12 years until he *met his father again, Ronnie appeared* to have inherited his passion for music. Among his most happy memories was lying curled in the warmth of his grandmother's bed listening to dance bands on the radio, and whenever he saw a musician carrying an instrument case he would stare long and hard after his departing footsteps, wondering if the man could be his father.



Scott bought his first instrument, a cornet, for five shillings before graduating to a saxophone. "I walked past a musical instruments shop every day on my way to school, and I liked the look of them. There was an ancient soprano saxophone in the window: it had a double octave key which doesn't exist anymore. There were pads missing and I really didn't know a thing about the instrument except that I had to have it." By then his mother had remarried, to Solomon Berger, and it was Ronnie's stepfather who this time indulged him, buying the instrument. Scott seemed to have an immediate empathy with it and for a while he was content.

There were no professional jazz musicians at that time and Scott followed his father in playing dance music. To succeed, he soon realised, he *would need a decent instrument and* lessons. His stepfather again obliged, buying him a new and better saxophone and procuring Jack Lynn — Vera Lynn's father-in-law — as a teacher. Lynn taught Scott the basics, but it was with professional musicians who played jazz for their own amusement in jamming sessions that Scott learnt most.

Although he was a bright boy who had won a county scholarship to Central Foundation School and harboured early ambitions to be an architect, Scott left school when he was 15. Too young to serve he worked in a record shop by day and spent his evenings jamming on his saxophone at the Oxford and St George's Boys' Club in the East End. The small band they formed was named after him, the Ronnie Berger Band — Berger being his stepfather's name and the one Ronnie went by at that time.

With the outbreak of the Second World War and the blossoming of Soho drinking dens to cater for the crowds of drifters looking for out-of-hours revelry, jazz musicians began to find a willing, if woozy, audience. It did not matter that he was a beginner, Scott later said, his listeners were too drunk to care. The war also introduced *jazz from America to Britain, brought* over on the V discs made for American soldiers and, even though the Musicians' Union had banned American jazz players from performing in Britain, Scott managed to get hold of "acetates" — bootleg copies — of much of the music.

It was at the age of 16 that Scott's mother at last introduced him, over a cup of tea sipped in a café in Archer Street, to his father. The two were never *to become close, though* Ronnie's father was justifiably proud when his son, at the age of 19, was invited to become the youngest member of Ted Heath's band. Although he was fired after nine months, his career never looked back.

When Ronnie was 24, his father invited him to join the band he was leading on board the *Queen Mary* sailing to New York. There Scott fell under the spell of Charlie Parker and bebop. "When I first heard Charlie it was a revelation," he said. "It was contemporary jazz." He stayed longer than he had intended in New York, surviving with his friend, the drummer Tony Crombie, on two coffees and one shared doughnut a day.

Returning eventually to London, Scott resolved to find a new home for classic jazz. *At first he hired rehearsal* rooms in London, such as Max's in Windmill Street. Young people would come to dance. In 1953 he formed a nine-piece band including several top players of the time and established himself as one of the most popular musicians around. His next group, the Jazz Couriers, with Tubby Hayes, also did well. But with the lifting of the ban on American musicians playing in Britain there was stiff competition and Scott, deciding he needed more exposure, opened a club.

Together with Peter King, a former saxophone player in his band, he started in Gerard Street in 1959 in a basement den at the bottom of a narrow stairway. With its five-bob admission charge, bare floor, rows of seats near the bandstand and base*ment lavatories, it was a far cry from* the club he was to open five years later on a new premises in Frith Street.

At that time a six-nights-a-week jazz club was unheard of. "Anyone who opens a jazz club is in for a struggle," Scott later acknowledged. "You either accept that or you open a discotheque or strip joint." But Scott survived and it was there that the British jazz scene was born and brought up. Even when the club teetered on the brink of financial disaster his humour did not desert him. Eat, drink and be merry, he would enjoin his clients. "Pretend you are on the *Titanic*."

Scott's job brought him face to face not only with all the idols of his youth, people like Count Basie, Sarah Vaughan, Coleman "Hawk" Hawkins, and Stan Getz, but also with the aristocrats and celebrities of the day. Princess Margaret, Peter Sellers, Spike Milligan and Kenneth Clarke were all regulars. The club became so successful that in 1991 Ronnie Scott's Club in Birmingham was opened. In 1981 Scott was appointed OBE.

A year ago Scott himself was forced to stop playing the saxophone because of a gum operation in which all his teeth were extracted. *Dentists, however*, fitted a plate and Scott had resumed practice. He was planning to play for the first time in public again on Christmas Eve.

Ronnie Scott never married. Though he had, in his own words, "chased women halfway round the world," he thought that, like his own father, he had not made a good parent. He is survived by his two children.

EDWARD LEADBITTER

Edward Leadbitter, Labour MP for The *Hartlepools, 1964-92, died* on December 24 aged 77. He was born on June 18, 1919.

TED LEADBITTER frequently seemed in a state of perpetual indignation with his party, the state of the country and life itself, although at other times he was full of northeastern cheeriness. He was always conscious of the importance of his position as an MP. When a telegraph pole was erected in his constituency without his knowledge he fired off a protest to Tony Benn, who was Postmaster-General at the time and, therefore, the minister responsible for telegraph *poles. Successive Prime Min*isters also became accustomed to receiving his regular letters of complaint or advice.

Leadbitter was born in Easington, the constituency associated for so long with Emanuel Shinwell, but he spent most of his life in Hartlepool. One of his grievances was that the Labour whips would not allow him to become mayor of the town in 1965. In view of the Wilson Government's precarious one-figure majority their insistence that he should be a full-time MP was understandable.

Hartlepool compensated him, however, making him the borough's first honorary *freeman in 1983. He was also* the long-term president of Hartlepool Football Club and continued to live in the town after he retired from the Commons.

In the House he first became noticeable as one of the more excitable members of the 1964 intake. As an MP he was loyal but difficult. He was all for scrapping the Wilson prices and incomes policy, he opposed the Callaghan cuts in 1976 and he described Britain's continuing membership of the EEC as an unmitigated disaster. Earlier, while his party was about to embark on the Jenkins programme of sexual reforms, he had protested vigorously about the possible legalisation of homosexuality.

He was always unpredictable. Although a miner's son brought up in a colliery town, he was prepared to consider any sensible alternative to coal. His backing for one nuclear power station was so forthright that it brought accusations of disloyalty from the miners.

He served in the Royal Artillery during the war, gaining a commission and being appointed a War Office Gunnery Instructor. Cheltenham Teachers' Training College completed the education he had begun at Easington Colliery School and this enabled him to become one of the postwar emergency-trained teachers. He taught at Hartlepool secondary schools from *1949 and devoted most of his* spare time to politics. He had joined the Labour Party in 1938 and lost no opportunity of proselytising his views when he was in the Army. Back in Hartlepool he progressed from canvassing to membership of the borough council and in 1958 became president of his constituency party. Then, in 1964, he was chosen to fight the general election.

The Hartlepools, with a permanent unemployment problem, might have seemed a cast-iron Labour seat but in fact it was held for the Conservatives — by Commander J. S. Kerans (of *HMS Amethyst* fame) — between 1959 and 1964. As far back as 1945 Labour had won it in the Attlee landslide by a bare 275 votes. Once Leadbitter had recaptured it in 1964, however, the party never looked back. Its majority grew steadily firmer — in 1979, for instance, it registered no swing to the Tories at the time of the Thatcher triumph — and when Leadbitter came to hand over this working-class constituency to his successor, the slightly improbable figure of Peter Mandelson, it proved safer than ever.

Leadbitter's great Commons coup was to ask the question in the House which prompted Margaret Thatcher's revelation that Anthony Blunt, the former Surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, had been a Soviet spy. Blunt's involvement had been rumoured for *some time and would have* been hard to disguise after the then imminent publication of Andrew Boyle's book, *The Climate of Treason* (though Blunt's name was, in fact, concealed under a pseudonym in the first edition).

Nevertheless, it was Leadbitter, with typical indignation, who put the question. His success led him to concentrate on security matters and he began increasingly to ask Commons questions about the Cheltenham GCHQ, the possible penetration of the Civil Service by Soviet agents and even the activities of Pamela Bordes, the former Commons research assistant and callgirl. In his tendency towards self-importance he was not, of course, alone in the Commons. He was notably quick-tempered in an assembly not noted for its placidity but this was balanced by an innate cheerfulness which eventually succeeded in breaking through. He was a willing House of Commons workhorse, serving on the Estimates Committee, the Select Committee on Science and Technology, the Select Committee on Energy and on the chairmen's panel.

Leadbitter married Phyllis Mellin in 1940. She survives him, together with their son and daughter.

MAJOR ROBERT FIELD-MARSHAM

Major Robert Field-Marsham, former master of the Eridge Hunt, died on November 24 aged 91. He was born on August 5, 1905.

THE BOXING Day meet of the Eridge Hunt on the spacious common at Tunbridge Wells was a gathering that always gave particular pleasure to the hunt's former master, Robert Field-Marsham. He was the born countryman who *lived* for green fields, great woods, wild life and foxhunting. He wished others the same pleasure.

Boxing Day meets are different from the rest of the hunting calendar. They attract up to several thousand townspeople and their children in cars and on foot. Field-Marsham used to say of the Boxing Day meet: "It is the great day in the year when town meets country." In his quiet way he had a knack of making everybody feel welcome. Children were encouraged to make friends with the hunt horses and hounds and to ask questions of the master and his staff. The warmth of his welcome was typical of a man who always added two words to his letters before signing them: "Keep Smiling."

His own beginnings as a huntsman could not have been more modest. He had a bobbery pack which he hunted on the family estate on the Sussex-Kent border and any other place where he was welcome. These bobbery packs originated in India to hunt jackal and consisted of a mix of hunting hounds, usually of unknown ancestry, and a couple of dogs. Field-Marsham's pack was mostly made up of terriers.

He went on to bigger and better packs, becoming one of the outstanding amateurs to carry the horn in the past half century. Also, in his latter years he was acknowledged as one of the finest judges of the foxhound. This brought him invitations, readily accepted, to judge at the top hound shows on both sides of the Atlantic. His judging was brisk, knowing as he did, exactly what he wanted in the hound's outlook and confirmation. This was especially appreciated by spectators who, even at the bigger hound shows, have to sit for hour after hour on very hard seats.

Robert Field-Marsham was born at Ashurst Park near Tunbridge Wells. Immensely tall and slim, he resembled his father in appearance, his father being known in his army days as "The Pole". The son was a natural athlete. At Eton he and his younger brother, Charlie, were both in the Cricket XI. After school he joined the Army and was commissioned into the Queen's Bays, serving in India for more than a decade. Here again his sporting prowess came to the fore. At polo he was noted for his length of shot and skilful tactics playing at No3. In 1924 he was in the Queen's Bays team that won the inter regimental cup for polo.

Back in England he hunted his bobbery pack and began to take a serious interest in foxhunting. He was extraordinarily lucky in his mentors. His gifts as a huntsman, which came from a close affinity with hounds and his deep knowledge of the countryside, was noticed by William Freeman, a man exceptionally good at his job as professional huntsman to the Eridge. (His more famous brother, Frank Freeman, was huntsman to the Pytchley when the Queen, as a child, had her only ride to hounds.)

William Freeman could be short tempered and tired of young army officers with ambitions of being masters of foxhounds and hunting their own hounds, coming down from London to ask for his advice. They were fairly quickly dismissed. "Mugs" he would call them. Field-Marsham was different. Freeman was unstinting in his help and advice and had the young man as a whipper-in to the Eridge when on army leave.

Field-Marsham went on to become master of the Aldershot foxhounds and then moved into the big time as joint master of the Bicester and Walden Hill, a four-day-a-week country in which he hunted hounds two days a week with the professional huntsman doing so on the other two days. The Bicester then attracted wealthy men from the City of London who demanded a high level of fast sport in order to shake up their livers and tire their over-fresh horses. Field-Marsham was not found wanting.

Here again he had distinguished *mentors* as he rose to make his own impact on foxhunting. That brilliant huntsman Sir Peter Farquhar and his wife, with her encyclopaedic knowledge of hound breeding, were in control in the neighbouring hunt country, the Waddon Chase. They were unstinting when it came to giving their young neighbour the benefit of their vast experience.

It was after the Second World War when he began his long association with the Eridge which *was to last* nearly two decades, most of it as master and huntsman. This was a subscription pack but hounds were owned by Lord Abergavenny. He was so impressed by the new master that he presented him with the hounds. After a few years Field-Marsham had one of the greatest thrills of his life when a hound which he bred, Eridge Freedom, was champion bitch at the Peterborough Fox Hound Show. It was a great triumph, and an unusual one in those days, for a small provincial pack taking on and beating the cream of the Shires and other big fashionable kennels.

When an injury forced him to give up riding he became a farmer at Top Hill, a part of the old family estate which he retained when the main house was sold. He bred Friesian cattle concentrating on a dairy herd with the same thoroughness and imagination that marked his endeavours when breeding hounds. A couple of times a year he would take the long road down to Pembroke to confer with Mr Gibby, a nationally acknowledged ex*pert on Friesians*.

A month before his death he moved back to Ashurst Park, now a place of help and comfort for the elderly, and which the family had left some 40 years previously. In his latter years he liked to walk out one or two dogs in the evening at dusk before settling down to a whisky. It was after this ritual that he passed away quietly.

Field-Marsham married twice; first Gee Pilkington whom he later divorced, then a second time, Joan Nevill, widow of his younger brother Charlie. Both predeceased him. He is survived by his stepson.

Field-Marsham at the Boxing Day meet of the Eridge Hunt, 1959

ON THIS DAY

December 26, 1828

James Wyatt (later Sir Jeffry Wyatville) won the competition, commissioned by George IV in 1824, to remodel most of Windsor Castle. In the fire of 1992 most of the castle's works of art were saved.

WINDSOR CASTLE.

We gave some short time ago, a partial but most accurate, description of the exterior appearance and internal embellishments of the Castle, nearly to the extent that they had then proceeded, and we shall not fail from time to time to resume the subject with an accuracy and faithfulness of detail in which exclusive opportunities must prevent the possibility of misleading, until the accomplishment of this magnificent national structure.

The corridor or gallery which we before described as extending round two entire sides of the quadrangle that forms the building, is now completed, and very nearly furnished with specimens of the rarest works of art; these consist of pictures, by Zoffany and Canaletto, which ornament its walls, the greater number by the latter artist; and although the works of this master are not now held in any very high degree of estimation, there are here some beautiful specimens of his art: these pictures, we believe, were all the property of his late Majesty, and on that account possess a more sacred interest and value with their present owner. There are besides these hung round the walls, to be seen, the portraits of Nelson, St Vincent, Pitt, and many other great names.

In different parts of this corridor, too, as you walk along, the eye occasionally rests upon some almost animated bust, from the perfectness of its resemblance, in marble or in bronze: these are all of some eminent men, and of His Majesty's personal and private friends. *Amongst the latter are busts of his* late Royal Highness the Duke of York, and the late Marquis of Hastings. At the head of the corridor near to the door leading into the music gallery stands a magnificent bust in bronze of King James I.

There are besides these busts, a number of figures in bronze, most exquisitely executed by the hands of the first artists, and here and there the attention is frequently arrested by cabinets of ebony of the most lavish and costly taste and workmanship, which are understood to have been once in the possession of Cardinal Wolsey, for whom they are said to have been made, and they are indeed well-worthy the enormous expenditure of that princely priest.

These cabinets have all been newly polished, and are so admirably well arranged in this gallery, that on quitting one after a minute *examination of its beauties, you are quickly* again gratified by lighting upon another of still more exquisite attractions; the intermediate spaces between these cabinets are occupied by the busts we have already named, tripods, camdelabra, settees, &c, so that not an inch remains unappropriated to some delightful specimen of taste and art.

At each door leading out of the corridor to His Majesty's apartments, are two tripods, richly carved and gilt, each bearing three *lamps; and the effect of these at night, when* lighted, on the surrounding ornaments, is said to surpass belief in its magnificence.

There are also placed in the corridor at convenient distances several very rich ormoulu clocks, by Vulliamy, so that the eye in this place never wanders, one rich or rare work of art immediately succeeding to another, and the whole presenting a constellation of the most magnificent and costly grandeur.

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THE TIMES TODAY

THURSDAY DECEMBER 26 1996

NEWS

Killers 'should be beheaded'

■ The brother of an Australian nurse murdered in Saudi Arabia has called for two British nurses charged with the crime to be publicly beheaded if found guilty.

Yvonne Gilford's brother, Frank, spoke as Lucille McLauchlan protested her innocence through her family in Dundee after telephoning them from the jail in Dhahran where she is being held with Deborah Parry .... **Pages 1, 3**

Archbishop's warning against the Tarot

■ The Archbishop of York warned people not to turn to "feel-good" spiritualities such as astrology and Tarot cards after a year haunted by the horrors of Dunblane and the murder of Philip Lawrence. The Archbishop of Canterbury also focused on the two tragedies, saying society had come adrift from its moral roots .... **Page 1**

Church bomber

Two sisters were killed and many other people seriously injured after a woman blew herself up in a crowded German church during midnight Mass.... **Pages 1, 15**

Rates alert

Eddie George, the Governor of the Bank of England, said that interests would have to rise early in the new year to counter the threat of inflation .... **Page 1**

Masonic police

Police officers who are Masons should have to disclose their membership to remove suspicions about the movement's influence, the Police Complaints Commission says .... **Page 2**

Fatbusting drug

An American drug company has come up with a drug that prevents the body from absorbing almost a third of the fat that is eaten .... **Page 3**

Fire kills mother

A mother died and two children were seriously hurt after a petrol bomb was put through their letter box .... **Page 4**

Hunt for giant squid

Up to 60ft long, with a complex brain, eyes as big as dinner plates and a powerful parrot-like beak, the giant squid is the largest unknown animal on Earth — but nobody has seen it in its natural setting. Now naturalists aim to remedy that .... **Page 9**

Family's fears

A Croatian family given refuge in Britain after their home was overrun by Serbs are to be deported to face what they say will be almost certain death .... **Page 10**

Mormons' success

A hundred and fifty years after settling in Salt Lake City, and a century after renouncing polygamy, the Mormons remain vulnerable to ridicule. The organisation is, however, more powerful than ever .... **Page 11**

Deathbed secret

Civil rights activists hoping for a death-bed declaration explaining the murder of Martin Luther King in 1968 were disappointed when the killer, James Earl Ray, fell into a coma .... **Page 12**

Hebron clash

Israeli security forces and Jewish settlers clashed during demonstrations in Hebron against plans for Palestinian self-rule for most of the West Bank town ... **Page 13**

Terror threat

Algerian fundamentalists have written to President Chirac threatening to continue their terror campaign in France and "destroy your country"......... **Page 14**

Serbia condemned

America condemned President Milosevic of Serbia for inciting protesters who clashed violently with opponents of his government in Belgrade .... **Page 15**

Dreaming of a bookies' payout

■ Bookmakers will have to pay out thousands of pounds after a light dusting of snow in some parts of the country. A public relations man who gave 1,300 customers a present of a £1 bet on snow in London came up trumps with a half-hour fall before dawn — the capital's first officially acknowledged white Christmas for two decades .... **Page 1**

ARTURO MARI/AP

The Pope giving his *Urbi et Orbi* Christmas Day blessing from the balcony at St Peter's. He wished people peace in 55 languages

BUSINESS

Taking power: CE Electic of America took control of Northern Electric after a £780 million bid battle. A new bid for one of the two remaining independent regional companies is expected soon .... **Page 44**

Bonus threat: Thousands of investors in building society accounts are in danger of losing their float bonuses unless they top up their accounts .... **Page 44**

Cable sale: KPN, the Dutch telecommunications business, is selling its British cable interestsas the industry continues its process of consolidation .... **Page 44**

Markets: The FTSE 100 closed on Christmas Eve up 5.3 at 4092.5. The pound rose 29 pfennigs to DM2.6046 and closed unchanged at $1.6740 .... **Page 41**

Cricket: England are thinking of replacing the specialist bowler Chris Silverwood with Craig White, a batsman who bowls, for the second Test against Zimbabwe in Harare .... **Page 23**

Football: Middlesbrough go into their Premiership match with Everton surrounded by injury worries and charged with a breach of league rules........................ **Page 23**

Sailing: Lucy Duncan reports from the Southern Ocean that the crew of *Concert* has too much spare time to devote to sleeping.......... **Page 26**

Racing: The meetings scheduled for Ayr, Newton Abbot and Wincanton have been abandoned because of frost. Hereford, Huntingdon, Sedgefield and Market Rasen inspect today .... **Page 28**

It's a cracker: Debra Craine relishes a glimpse of the Kirov as it once was — and should be again — as leading ballerina Altynai Asylmuratova takes centre stage in an old-fashioned *Nutcracker*........**Page 32**

A cappella charm: Catherine Bott struggles with a cold to deliver the hits of the Middle Ages in an unaccompanied performance of troubadours' songs ....**Page 32**

Art movie: Anthony Hopkins plays the unappealing hero of Merchant-Ivory's *Surviving Picasso*, more about Pablo the womaniser than Pablo the genius ....**Page 33**

Romancing the stone: A new show in Leeds celebrates the Victorian heyday of coloured sculpture, with its heady mix of onyx and bronze, gilt and inlay....................**Page 33**

Freudian slip: Lucian Freud's daughter Susie Boyt tells Noreen Taylor why she chooses not to use her famous surname and how she struggled to achieve recognition as a novelist .... **Page 17**

Pain killers: Dr Thomas Stuttaford hails the first anaesthetists, who mastered pain relief 150 years ago. Plus: brisk advice on getting over the seasonal indulgences... **Page 16**

Looking up: The Ski Company has ignored the economy end of the Alpine market to concentrate on the well-heeled — and its approach is paying dividends .... **Page 38**

Escape clause: Airlines have been ordered to improve evacuation facilities in case of fire, a decade after the Manchester blaze that killed 55 people............................**Page 38**

Gutsy work: Marianne Wiggins on Jeanette Winterson and Antonia Fraser on intrigue at the court of James I .... **Pages 34, 35**

President Yeltsin has repeatedly overcome crushing problems, somehow managing to keep reform alive. Now he must bring discipline and order to the Russian economy. If it fails, so too will reform

— *New York Times*

IN THE TIMES

■ POP
David Sinclair reviews the hits and misses of 1996: a troubled year for Oasis

■ INTERVIEW
Valerie Grove talks to Lady Olivier about the revival of her screen career

Preview: Another romp with Ratty, Toad and Mole in *The Willows in Winter* (ITV, 2.45pm) **Review:** How *EastEnders* has become an insult to the working-class and an absurd distortion of reality: grim, graceless and malevolent ....**Page 43**

Fox and hound

Legislation to ban hunting with hounds is not the most appropriate way to guarantee the welfare of the countryside.........................**Page 19**

A very English Roman

Let Seneca stand for an early example of British pragmatism in philosophy and politics. Politics still needs its intellectuals as well as its fixers ....**Page 19**

Neptune's big secret

The search for the giant squid provides science at the end of the millennium with its most appropriate quarry — the pursuit of the last great living creature to evade man's eye ....**Page 19**

WILLIAM REES-MOGG

Even now, literary fame is only stirring for John Aubrey. He published only one complete book in his lifetime and, despite his undoubted scholarship, his contemporaries saw him as a credulous gossip..............................**Page 18**

JOANNA PITMAN

Despite the modest but growing influence the Koreans have over our lives, much about their society and institutions remains unknown, hidden behind misunderstanding and cliché ....**Page 18**

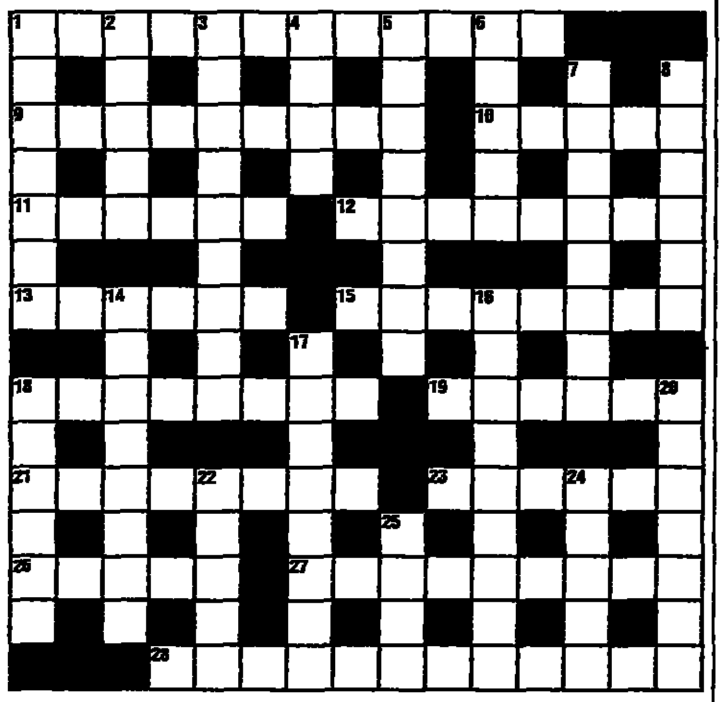
MAGNUS LINKLATER

The time may have come for the Dunblane parents to hand the campaigning over to others, to rejoin the community of which they are a part and to allow the healing process to begin ....**Page 18**

Ronnie Scott, jazz musician and nightclub owner; **Edward Leadbitter**, former Labour MP; **Major Robert Field-Marsham**, former master of the Eridge Hunt**Page 26**

Lord St John of Fawsley defends the Duke of Edinburgh's right to speak on guns; Gorbachev, *Pravda*, and *The Times*; unruly children; Sunday as a day of rest; Freemasonry ....**Page 19**

THE TIMES CROSSWORD NO 20,360



ACROSS

1 Today's activity – cubists' first retrospective festival showing great art (6,6).
9 Break vow to her, right? (5,4).
10 Old wine in Japan finally replaced by a port there (5).
11 Oriental flower festival (6).
12 Shouted and scared me awfully (8).
13 Fruit drink (6).
15 Lighter's satisfactory, passing cigarette around (3,5).
18 Excess weight of young boxer? (5,3).
19 Conservative way to get back – it could ruin the House (3,3).
21 Prepared mix with ripe onions, primarily? (8).
23 Some chap I called in top position (6).
26 Break out, getting clean over middle of gates (5).
27 Flattens note for heavy rock (9).
28 Luck, when kite flying, is generating tension (5-7).

DOWN

1 South London area banning its last two strikes (7).
2 Old source of drink's unknown to dry up (5).
3 Inexperienced jumper's got in a state (3,6).
4 Fellow stopping witches before end of spell? (4).
5 Community official making Jack & Co. regret turning up (8).
6 Turn volume up on Mahler's 5th to demonstrate depth of feeling (5).
7 Smash hit dance composer (8).
8 Flier arriving in German parts (6).
14 Stimulant drug to adulterate punch (8).
16 Father splitting capital treated us equably (4,5).
17 He dislikes the bellicose condition one's put in treaty (8).
18 The French Messieurs appearing for trial, all over strike (6).
20 Shade of dye around mid-blues – it's a benzene derivative (7).
22 Erect stone church (5).
24 Dandelion seeds left in pile of hay (5).
25 Pirate's shot aimed towards leg (4).

Solution to Puzzle No 20,359

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Times Two Crossword, page 44

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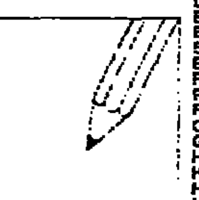
HIGHEST & LOWEST

Yesterday: Highest day temp: Guernsey, 7C (45F); lowest day max: Altnaharra, Highland, -4C (25F); highest rainfall: Newcastle upon Tyne, 0.15in; highest sunshine: Newquay, 6.7hr



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Recycled paper made up 34.5% of the raw material for UK newspapers in 1995

☐ **General:** England and Wales will be dry, but in some places overnight fog may be slow to clear. It will be cold, with a widespread frost overnight, and the frost will be slow to lift where the fog lingers. Winds will be generally light.

Scotland and Northern Ireland will have a cold, frosty start. Cloud will spread into northwestern parts of Scotland bringing sleet or snow, which will turn to rain at lower levels, but there will be further accumulations of snow on the hills.

☐ **London, SE England, E Anglia, Central S England, E Midlands, Channel Isles, SW England, S Wales:** Early fog patches clearing, generally dry with sunny spells. Wind southeasterly moderate. Frost again by evening. Maximum temperature 4C (39F).

☐ **E England, W Midlands, N Wales, NW England, Central N England, NE England:** Early fog patches, some slow to clear, then mostly dry with sunny spells. Wind southeasterly mostly light. Maximum temperature 2C to 4C (36F to 39F).

☐ **Lake District, Isle of Man, Borders, Edinburgh & Dundee, Aberdeen, SW Scotland, Glasgow:** Generally dry, cloud thickening later. Wind southwesterly, moderate to fresh. Maximum temperature 3C to 5C (37F to 41F).

☐ **Central Highlands, Moray Firth, NE Scotland, Argyll, NW Scotland, Orkney, Shetland, Northern Ireland:** Cloudy with rain or sleet and snow on the mountains. Wind south to southwesterly, fresh to strong. Milder. Maximum temperature 5C to 7C (41F to 45F).

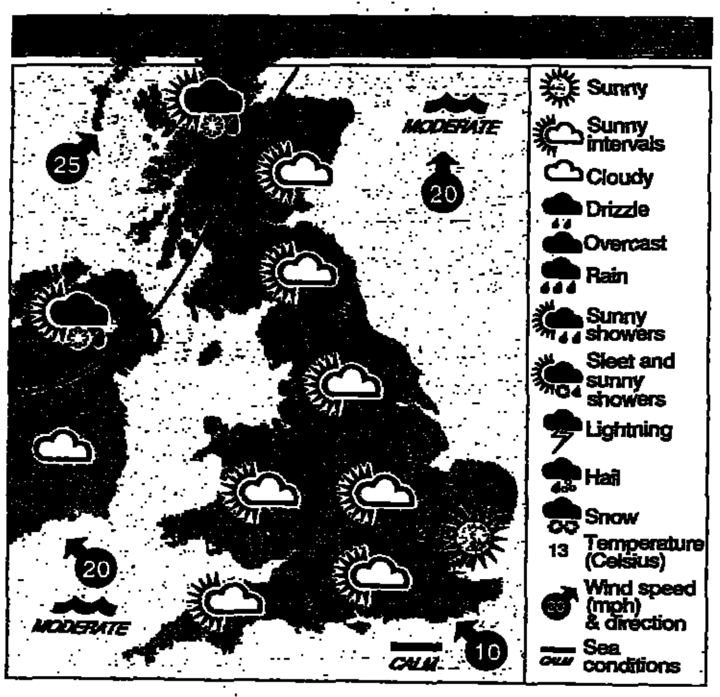
☐ **Outlook for Friday and Saturday:** Rain, sleet or snow in the north will spread south, petering out.

24 hrs to 5 pm: b=bright; c=cloud; d=drizzle; ds=dust storm; du=dull; f=fair; fg=fog; g=gale; h=hail; r=rain; sh=shower; sl=sleet; sn=snow; s=sun; t=thunder

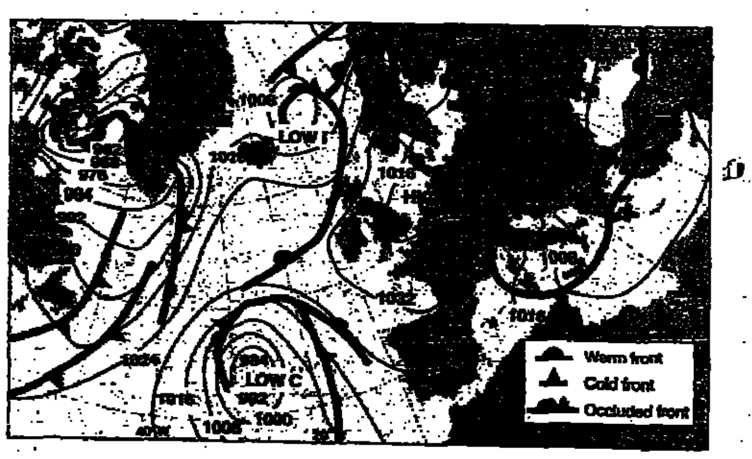
	Sun hrs	Rain in	Max C	F	
Aberdeen	0.5	0.01	3	37	c
Anglesey	3.3	-	6	43	s
Aspatria	0.3	0.01	2	36	c
Aviemore	0.2	-	-3	27	c
Belfast	-	-	5	41	c
Birmingham	3.5	0.01	4	39	r
Bognor R	X				
Bournem'th	0.8	-	4	39	b
Bristol	3.9	-	5	41	b
Buxton	2.0	0.01	3	37	s
Cardiff	5.5	-	5	41	s
Clacton	X				
Cleethorpes	X				
Colwyn Bay	1.2	-	5	41	c
Cromer	1.6	0.06	5	41	b
Dunbar	X				
Eastbourne	-	-	4	39	d
Edinburgh	X				
Eskdalemuir	0.8	0.01	3	37	sn
Exmouth	5.1	-	5	41	s
Falmouth	5.0	-	5	41	s
Fishguard	4.5	-	4	39	s
Folkestone	0.2	0.02	5	41	r
Glasgow	1.0	-	5	41	c
Guernsey	-	-	7	45	c
Hastings	-	-	4	39	c
Hayling I.	0.1	-	4	39	c
Herne Bay	X				
Hove	X				
Hunstanton	3.9	0.01	6	43	b
Ilfracombe	X				
Isle of Man	2.7	-	6	43	b
Jersey	5.4	0.04	6	43	s
Kinloss	-	-	0	32	c
Leeds	X				
Lerwick	3.3	-	3	37	s
Leuchars	-	-	3	37	c
Littlehmptn	0.3	-	4	39	b
London	0.3	0.01	5	41	b
Lowestoft	0.3	0.03	5	41	sh
Manchester	2.4	0.01	5	41	sn
Margate	-	0.01	5	41	r
Minehead	0.4	-	4	39	b
Morecambe	X				
Newcastle	0.2	0.16	4	39	sh
Newquay	6.7	-	5	41	s
Norwich	1.1	0.04	5	41	b
Oxford	2.8	-	5	41	s
Penzance	X	-	6	43	s
Poole	2.3	-	5	41	s
Prestatyn	X	0.01	5	41	sl
Ross-o-wye	1.4	-	4	39	c
Salcombe	X				
Sandown	1.2	-	4	39	b
Saunton Snd	4.2	-	6	43	s
Scarboro'	2.8	0.06	5	41	b
Shanklin	2.2	-	5	41	b
Shrewsbury	2.9	0.01	4	39	sh
Southport	1.9	-	5	41	b
Southsea	-	-	5	41	c
Stornoway	0.3	-	5	41	c
Swanage	3.2	-	5	41	s
Teignmouth	3.2	-	5	41	s
Tenby	6.6	-	5	41	s
Tiree	-	0.01	6	43	r
Torquay	1.9	-	5	41	b
Tynemouth	-	0.05	6	43	sh
Weymouth	4.4	-	5	41	s

	C	F			C	F			C	F			C	F	
Ajaccio	15	59	r	Corfu	18	64	c	Majorca	17	63	f	Rome	15	59	f
Akrotiri	20	68	f	C'phagn	-1	30	s	Malaga	16	61	f	S Fr'isco	13	55	s
Alex'dria	22	72	s	Dublin	3	37	c	Malta	20	68	s	S Paulo	29	84	c
Algiers	17	63	f	Dubrovnik	12	54	r	Melb'rne	24	75	s	Salzburg	-4	25	sn
Amst'dm	-2	28	s	Faro	15	59	f	Mexico C	18	64	s	Santiago	31	88	s
Athens	19	66	f	Florence	15	59	f	Miami	26	79	s	Seoul	6	43	c
B Aires	33	91	s	Frankfurt	-4	25	s	Milan	9	48	r	Sing'por	31	88	f
Bahrain	21	70	f	Funchal	18	64	f	Montreal	5	41	X	St'kholm	-6	21	sn
Bangkok	28	82	s	Geneva	5	41	c	Moscow	-17	1	sn	Strasb'rg	-4	25	c
Barbados	29	84	f	Gibraltar	16	61	f	Munich	-6	21	sn	Sydney	31	88	s
Barcelona	11	52	r	Helsinki	-7	19	sn	N Delhi	18	64	s	Tangier	16	61	f
Beirut	20	68	f	Hong K	21	70	s	N York	13	55	f	Tel Aviv	20	68	s
Belgrade	0	32	r	Innsbrck	-1	30	c	Nairobi	25	77	f	Tenerife	22	72	f
Berlin	-5	23	s	Istanbul	15	59	f	Naples	16	61	f	Tokyo	9	48	s
Bermuda	20	68	f	Jeddah	30	86	s	Nice	12	54	f	Toronto	3	37	f
Biarritz	14	57	f	Jo'burg	26	79	f	Oslo	-6	21	f	Tunis	22	72	f
Borde'x	10	50	c	L Angels	X			Paris	-2	28	c	Valencia	16	61	f
Brussels	-3	27	s	L Palmas	21	70	s	Peking	15	59	s	Vanc'ver	-3	27	sn
Budapest	-1	30	f	Le Touqt	-2	28	s	Perth	24	75	s	Venice	10	50	f
Cairo	23	73	s	Lisbon	11	52	f	Prague	-8	18	s	Vienna	-5	23	s
Cape Tn	25	77	s	Locarno	7	45	c	Reykjavik	5	41	f	Warsaw	-10	14	f
Ch'church	16	61	X	Luxembg	-5	23	s	Rhodes	18	64	c	Wash'ton	16	61	r
Chicago	-8	18	f	Luxor	24	75	s	Rio de J	28	82	f	Wel'ngton	16	61	X
Cologne	-2	28	s	Madrid	7	45	r	Riyadh	20	68	s	Zurich	-2	28	c

Temperatures at midday local time on Tuesday. X = not available



Changes to chart below from noon: low C fills as it moves slowly east. Low I fills as it moves into northern Scandinavia. High F declines as it drifts northwest. High P slowly drifts east.



TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
London Bridge	2:24	6.8	2:47	6.9
Aberdeen	1:57	4.1	2:07	4.3
Avonmouth	7:55	13.1	8:18	12.8
Belfast	-	-	12:08	3.6
Cardiff	7:56	12.2	8:15	11.8
Devonport	6:23	5.4	6:44	5.1
Dover	11:58	6.5	-	-
Dublin (N Wall)	0:09	3.8	12:27	4.1
Falmouth	5:57	5.1	6:12	4.7
Greenock	1:23	3.3	1:22	3.7
Harwich	0:20	3.9	12:40	3.8
Holyhead	11:06	5.6	11:25	5.3
Hull (Albert D)	7:02	7.2	7:11	7.3
Ilfracombe	6:42	9.1	7:04	8.9
King's Lynn	7:01	6.5	7:17	6.6

TODAY	AM	HT	PM	HT
Leith	3:14	5.3	3:30	5.4
Liverpool	11:59	9.2	-	-
Lowestoft	10:29	2.3	10:23	2.5
Margate	0:43	4.7	1:07	4.8
Milford Haven	6:56	6.8	7:17	6.7
Newquay	5:44	6.6	6:03	6.4
Oban	6:14	4.0	6:38	3.9
Penzance	5:23	5.5	5:41	5.3
Portland	7:21	2.1	7:46	1.9
Portsmouth	-	-	12:02	4.6
Shoreham	-	-	12:06	6.1
Southampton	11:28	4.5	11:52	4.4
Swansea	7:05	9.2	7:27	9.1
Tees	4:22	5.1	4:35	5.2
Walton-on-Naze	0:13	4.0	12:35	4.0

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Sun rises: 8.06 am
Sun sets: 3.57 pm
Moon sets 8.41 am
Moon rises 6.03 pm

New moon January 9

London 3.57 pm to 8.06 am
Bristol 4.07 pm to 8.16 am
Edinburgh 3.43 pm to 8.44 am
Manchester 3.55 pm to 8.25 am
Penzance 4.25 pm to 8.21 am

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THURSDAY DECEMBER 26 1996

Silverwood may be sacrificed for second Test against Zimbabwe

Silverwood, left, raises a smile in conversation with White during England's delayed net practice yesterday, even though he may lose his place to the Yorkshire all-rounder

England ponder White option

FROM SIMON WILDE IN HARARE

ENGLAND ought to be going into the second Test match against Zimbabwe, which starts here today, brimful of confidence. After all, if David Lloyd, the coach, has said "we murdered them and they know it" once since the drawn first Test match ended four days ago, he must have said it a thousand times.

So it is surprising to dwell on the change that England are contemplating making to their side for the match, in which victory would give them their first overseas Test series triumph for four years. It involves the far from bold notion of replacing a specialist bowler with a batsman who bowls. Bolstering your side with a seventh batsman seems a strange way to show that you mean business.

The batsman in question is Craig White, the bowler Chris Silverwood. White played the most recent of his six Test matches — all of which have taken place in England — 16 months ago. In those matches he claimed eight wickets at more than 40 runs apiece, and one of the characteristics of the first phase of his international career was the apparent reluctance of Michael Atherton, the England captain, to give him the ball.

Silverwood, on the other hand, was playing his first Test match in Bulawayo last week and while he, too, found Atherton cautious about employing him, he came away with four economical wickets in 25 overs. *Does he really* deserve to be dropped for a man who reached Africa only on Monday night, has not played for a fortnight and prepared with one brief net session yesterday afternoon?

ZIMBABWE (probable): A D R Campbell (captain), G W Flower, M H Dekker, D L Houghton, A Flower, A C Waller, G J Whittall, P A Strang, H H Streak, E A Brandes, H R Olonga.

ENGLAND (from): M A Atherton (captain), N V Knight, A J Stewart, N Hussain, G P Thorpe, J P Crawley, C White, R D B Croft, D Gough, C E W Silverwood, A D Mullally, P C R Tufnell.

Umpires: R Tiffin (Zimbabwe) and K T Francis (Sri Lanka).

Match referee: Hanumant Singh (India).

On a Harare Sports Club pitch that could well be full of runs, and with Zimbabwe strengthening their hand by replacing Carlisle with Dekker and considering the option of playing an extra batsman themselves, England are going to need all the bowling firepower that they can muster if they are going to dismiss the opposition twice, a feat they accomplished in Bulawayo for only the fourth time in 20 overseas Tests.

Logically, the decision is flawed, but for England the temptation to play White is founded in reasoning not solely to do with winning the match. Their tour to date has been dogged by the absence of an effective all-rounder, Ronnie Irani, the original choice, having shown himself to be short of the necessary form and fitness.

One consequence has been that, with Cork missing, they have an alarmingly long tail, with *Croft, Gough* and Mullally batting at least one place too high in the order at Nos 7, 8 and 9 respectively. Indeed, when Croft made his Test debut against Pakistan at the Oval in August, he went in at No 10. Without such a weak lower order, the embarrassing three-day defeat at the hands of Mashonaland might never have happened.

In short, now that they finally have an all-rounder with them who can make runs at No 7 and chip in with the odd wicket, England want to play him. However, they may come to regret not having a bowler of Silverwood's accuracy in a seam attack not otherwise noted for its precision. If England's top six batsmen cannot take enough runs off Zimbabwe's modest attack — even one strengthened by the likely replacement of Bryan Strang by Eddo Brandes — why should a seventh?

Lloyd: believes that spinners may hold key

It is also ironic that, while England are contemplating such timidity, it has emerged that Lloyd was involved in "an exchange of words" with a local official, Ian Goggin, of the Mashonaland Cricket Association and Zimbabwe Cricket Union, immediately after the dramatic end to the first Test match, in which Lloyd allegedly berated him for Zimbabwe's negative tactics.

The matter was quickly *resolved in "amicable" fashion* between the England management and the Zimbabwe Cricket Union, so that, although it was brought to the attention of Hanumant Singh, the *International* Cricket Council match referee, no disciplinary action was taken.

For all the debate about England's seam attack, it is spin that may hold the key to the match, and the combined performance of Croft and Tufnell will be vital to the visitors' chances. They outbowled the seamers in Bulawayo, claimed match figures of 11 for 276 and conceded runs at a fraction over two an over.

There will certainly be no question of Atherton being afraid to throw either of them the ball. "Spinners can hold the game for you in the field if you are not getting wickets," he said. "I thought the crucial stage of the first Test was the last session of the fourth day, where the spinners and seamers built up pressure, particularly on Houghton, and we got three wickets. It was an excellent spell of bowling.

"The wickets over here have turned a bit more than perhaps wickets do in England *for the finger spinners and* they have benefited."

England's Christmas Day plans were disrupted when rain made the Harare nets too wet for the intended morning practice. The session — England's first in three days — was switched to the afternoon, delaying their Christmas meal until the evening. Rain is again expected to interrupt the match.

Australia favourites, page 31

IN THE TIMES

FORM CHOICE

Richard Dunwoody, above, rides One Man at Kempton Park today looking for a record fourth victory in the King George VI Chase. The three-times champion jockey reveals his thoughts on the *big race exclusively* in *The Times*

PAGE 29

CHOICE DAY

A full guide to where to find the best of the Boxing Day football and racing

PAGES 24, 28, 29, 30

CHOICE MOMENT

Simon Barnes continues a series on the best days of the sporting year by recalling the feat of the man who wore the golden shoes

PAGE 27

PRIZE CHOICE

Test your knowledge with the prize Jumbo Sports Crossword

PAGE 27

Racing smitten by frost

WHILE England's cricketers watched the rain fall in Harare, weather also took toll of sport back home. The race meetings scheduled today for Ayr, Newton Abbot and Wincanton have been abandoned because of frost.

Four other meetings — Hereford, *Huntingdon*, Sedgefield and Market Rasen — depend on inspections this morning, but the top meeting at Kempton Park *should* go ahead.

Hereford inspect at 7.30, needing an improvement in conditions. Sedgefield and Huntingdon have inspections at 7.30, Market Rasen at 8.30.

Bridgend's rugby union match against Moseley has also been cancelled.

Charge adds to Robson's problems

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

MIDDLESBROUGH go into their FA Carling Premiership match with Everton this afternoon still surrounded by injury worries and in the knowledge that they have been formally charged with a *breach of league rules after* calling off the trip to Blackburn Rovers last Saturday.

Bryan Robson, the Middlesbrough manager, will assess the fitness of Juninho, Steve Vickers and Curtis Fleming this morning. All have a 50-50 chance of playing, but Nigel Pearson, Philip Stamp and Alan Moore are ruled out.

Middlesbrough pulled out of the game at Ewood Park because they had 23 players unavailable because of injuries, illness and suspensions, but they did so without permission, and the rules state that clubs must fulfil their fixture obligations.

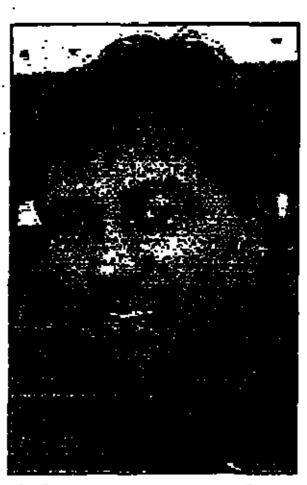
Mike Lee, a Premier League spokesman, said that Middlesbrough must now appear before a league commission on January 14 to answer the charge. The club is prepared to present medical evidence to support its case at the hearing.

Meanwhile Robson has replied to Fabrizio Ravanelli's criticism of training facilities and coaching methods in the Premiership. Ravenelli, the £7 million Italy international, whose scathing remarks were made in an interview on Italian television, claimed that he was forced to train on his own at Middlesbrough using charts supplied by Juventus, his previous club.

"Ravanelli trained on his own when he stayed behind during our pre-season tours, but he does not train on his own now," Robson said. "The *English system takes its toll on* players. You cannot overdo it in training otherwise it affects your fitness in matches."

Arsène Wenger, the Arsenal manager, has accused Nikola Jerkan, Nottingham Forest's Croatian defender, of cheating and said that it was Jerkan who *should* have been sent off instead of Ian Wright, the Arsenal forward, during their clash at the City Ground.

Wright was shown the red card on Saturday after an off-the-ball incident with Jerkan during Forest's 2-1 win. The defender crashed to the ground as the players jostled for positions while awaiting a free kick and Jerkan claimed afterwards that his shin was raked by Wright's studs.



Robson: concerns continue

Wright, who has denied the accusation, now faces a three-match ban, but Steve Lodge, the referee, who admits that he acted on his assistant's advice, has promised to look at a video recording.

Wenger said: "It is obvious from the film that Jerkan was cheating. I agree Ian Wright might have acted provocatively and *I know that we have to* adjust our ways to make sure we keep 11 players on the field, but the reaction by Jerkan to anything that Wright did was *ridiculous. I* think *the* video makes it perfectly clear and I think the matter should be judged on that evidence.

"What Jerkan did is something for which foreign players have a bad reputation. Speaking generally, I think an English player would not act *like* that, but *foreigners* are bringing bad things as well as good things to the game here."

Meanwhile, Wright faces Sheffield Wednesday at Hillsborough this afternoon knowing that a booking could put *him out of Arsenal's plans* at the start of the new year. Unless Lodge changes his mind after watching the film. Wright will miss Arsenal's FA Cup meeting with Sunderland on January 4, a Premiership match against the same opposition a week later and the next match as well.

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مكتب الاهرام

Preston's favourite son reflects on his lifetime of service on and off the field

Man of the people who was touched by the gods

Rob Hughes finds Tom Finney working hard and still in fine form at the age of 74

Tom Finney eyed the Porsches and Mercedes of the modern footballers at a pre-Christmas game. "I don't blame them, I don't envy them, but all this money that we're paying, sometimes for very ordinary players, means they have lost the common touch," the still-sprightly septuagenarian said.

Finney, from a family of six whose mother died when she was 32, played and simultaneously built up a business on values of loyalty, respect and sheer endeavour that need brook no comparisons with today's commercial sporting world. But, before the players, who today are manipulated by agents and who are rewarded for moving on to new clubs and new contracts every two or three years, ask what this old gentleman can know of their temptations, listen to what happened on May 18, 1952, when Finney left the field in Florence, where Italy and England had drawn 1-1.

"The president of Palermo approached me," he said. "He was a prince, somebody said. He wanted me to sign for his club, and he was offering a signing-on fee of £10,000 in my hand, and £120 a game.

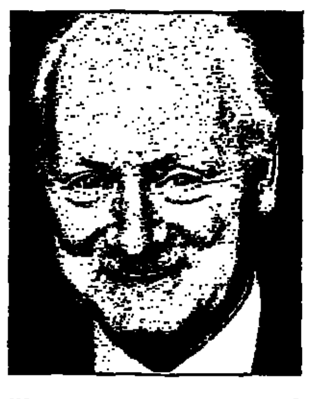
"Are you interested?" the Palermo prince asked. Finney was bemused. A one-club man, Preston-born and bred, he had to admit that he was *very* interested; he told his wife, Elsie, that for the signing-on fee he would have to play for Preston North End for ten more years at the weekly wage of £14.

But, back on home soil, Nathanial Buchan, the Preston chairman, said: "If tha doesn't play for us, tha doesn't play for anybody." Finney said that he would like a decision from the board. "I'll tell thee the board decision nah, lad!" And that was the end of Finney's wanderlust.

By 1960 he had retired, having scored 187 goals in 431 League games for Preston, and 30 goals in 76 England internationals. He was the most complete forward of his time: he began 40 internationals on the right wing, sometimes preferred to Stanley Matthews, 33 at outside left, three at centre forward ... and twice, because of injuries to others, he moved to what he felt was his natural position, inside left. He scored from each of those positions and, between 1955 and 1958, playing centre forward for Preston, he hit the target 66 times in 98 games.

All this from a man who served in the Army during the Second World War, from the ages of 20 to 24. Think about it — those are all the years through which we have come to know, to be impressed by, Steve McManaman. And, no doubt, if McManaman were to run for another ten years in Liverpool red, they would build a stand in his name, with seating in the club colours picking out the image of him in action, just as Preston have at Deepdale for Finney, their president.

Finney admires McManaman, for his attitude, his application, his respect for the game and its players. But Finney has no doubt that many of the top performers in the game today do not respect all that comes their way to the extent that players should do.



'I'm very concerned about the ferocity of tackles and this feigning you get from players today'

Finney on the modern game

"I don't see a lot of the Premier League," he said, "I don't have Sky, but, when I do get to those matches, I'm very concerned about the ferocity of tackles. We had players who were real hard men — Dave Mackay, Tommy Docherty, Jimmy Scoular — they were hard, they would take the ball, the man and everything else. There was never anything malicious, and this feigning that you get from players today just would never happen."

The making of a career, the making of men, comes and goes with the times. Finney's father, to whom he listened a lot, dissuaded him from signing on full, six shillings a week apprentice terms for Preston, even though the boy had made up his mind at the age of seven that he wanted to follow in the steps of Alex James.

By the time war came, Finney was a qualified plumber, eternally to be remembered as the Preston Plumber. He travelled to matches on the bus with supporters — the common touch — and, when the Army took him overseas, he turned adversity into opportunity.

"We had a team, The Wanderers, with marvellous players like Harry Clifton, Mickey Fenton, Bertie Mee," he said. "That alone was good experience, but playing on hard pitches in Egypt, against really tricky opponents who ran around in bare feet and in bandages, sharpened up our game."

His brother, Joe, had written from Burma suggesting that, if they got out of this alive, Tom the Plumber and Joe the Electrician should go into business. Finney Brothers expanded quickly after the war, and grew, despite Joe's untimely death through cancer at 47, into a company employing 120 men with a £2.5 million turnover.

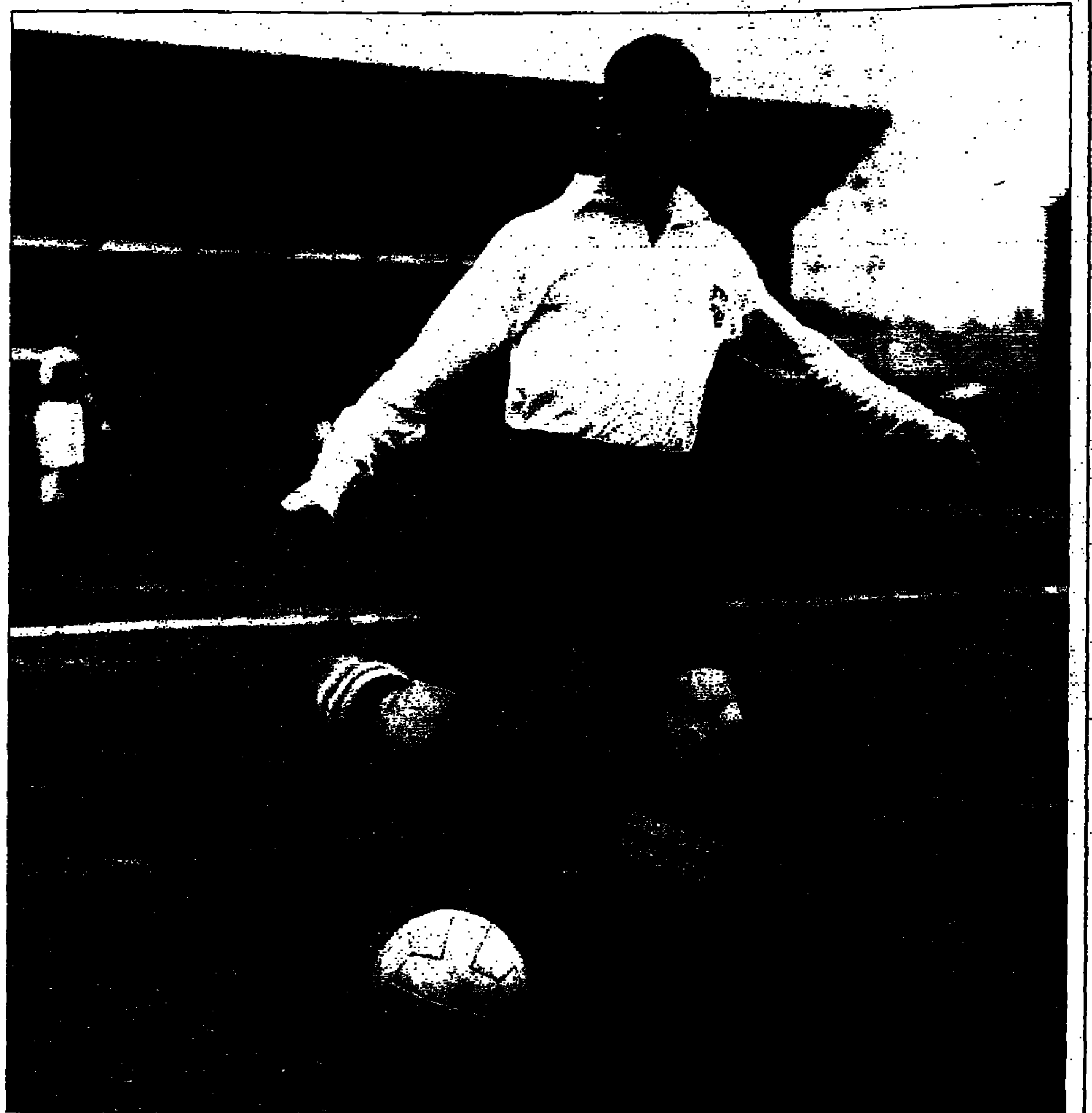
Even today, Tom still goes in to work, pricing quantities across a range of lighting, electrical, plumbing and central heating and acoustic ceilings. And still the lure of the game, the fidelity with Preston, takes him to Deepdale, where his credibility is the catalyst to rebuilding the club from the decline where it fell once Finney hung up his boots.

Of all the men he played with, none was more decorated than Sir Stanley Matthews. Yet Finney shared a room with Matthews on England duty and, when the knight asked the commoner how much he received from his percentage on boot sales, Matthews was shocked. "Hell, that's more than the £500 the Co-op are paying me," Matthews said.

"I told him: 'Stan, you're a chump going in for a lump sum.'" This from a player earning £1,000 a year for being "Sir Tom" of Preston, and, he reckons, £3,000 per year from his business acumen, his newspaper column, his boot and ball endorsements.

"It's been a good life, make no mistake," Finney said in the kitchen of his bungalow in the Fulwood district of Preston, where, man and boy, he has been a legend for most of his lifetime. He met Pelé, just once, at a dinner party.

"There you have the shining example that, no matter what the rewards, a man can have dignity along with everything else," Finney said. He regrets only that Pelé saw Finney's England also just once; the Brazilian's father had taken him to the United States, told him that he would see a real side, England. "And we blooming well lost, *one-nothing* to the USA."



Finney remained with Preston throughout his career. He was regarded as the most complete forward of his generation

There were grander nights, such as Lisbon in 1950 when Finney scored four times from the left wing for England against Portugal. "I've always looked on it that I was an ambassador for the sport," he said.

"You played to the rules strictly, you committed yourself totally to the club and the game and, in my case, it keeps on giving things back. I feel very proud when I look at the ground, to think that I've had a stand built in my name. It's a lifetime's ambition, really."

Tom Finney, Justice of the Peace, OBE and CBE, never had the fame that Matthews enjoyed. He has, together with a 50-year stable marriage, everything else. "What I've been given," he said, "has been more than adequate."

And with that, with time pressing, he had to go. There were two engagements requiring his attendance: Age Concern, which has taken over a local church and for which Tom assists with keep-fit exercises for the aged, and Space, a Preston charity introducing handicapped children to the pleasures of movement and activity.

"Come along and see," Finney said. "You get real pleasure looking at the faces of those disabled kids when they go down the slide into a bed of softballs." The man, the lifetime, and the moving ball: no wonder he doesn't need a Porsche.

Celtic pin hopes on return of golden boy

By Kevin McCarra

AT A training session earlier this week, Paolo di Canio was spotted breaking in a pair of gold boots, and they are likely to be donned for the match with Aberdeen at Pittodrie this evening. The choice of footwear may testify to dandyish impulses, but the glint of precious metal will also appeal to Celtic supporters, who have been accustomed to dross of late.

Their club lags 14 points behind Rangers and, even with three games in hand, that deficit is intimidating. For that reason, the fixture today will be a test of Celtic's morale as much as a survey of their skills. In the attempt to challenge Rangers, it may be that Tommy Burns's team suffers primarily from an insufficient number of good players, but it has also been damaged by loss of form.

Last season Celtic finished just four points adrift of Rangers in the Bell's Scottish League premier division and suffered a single defeat in their 36 matches. One almost expects to hear a catch in Burns's voice when he recalls those exploits, so fondly does he speak of the burgeoning optimism at that time.

It feels like a distant memory even if only a few months have passed. The precision of Celtic's play in that period seemed to promise an even more accomplished challenge this season. The maintenance of progress was particularly craved, given that Celtic must attempt to prevent Rangers from equalling their record of nine successive championships.

The side, uneasy with its responsibilities, has played stiffly and the crowd has responded, as it did in the strained 1-0 win over Dundee United on Saturday, with irritation. Burns claims that the impatience of supporters only places one further barrier between themselves and the success that they seek.

The manager believes that his team must become less concerned by the aesthetics of victory. "The players," Burns said, "have to get away from the idea that they must always be pretty and pass the ball. They need to work their way through matches without distracting themselves by thinking that they can play better."

Celtic should, all the same, be easier on the eye this evening. Di Canio returns after suspension, while Pierre van Hooijdonk and Jackie McNamara are fit once more. Andreas Thom, however, is doubtful with a back strain.

Greater difficulties confront Aberdeen, who lost 3-0 away to Kilmarnock on Saturday, but they are one of those sides that can look more accomplished when faced with a higher calibre of opposition. Stewart McKimmie, their captain, however, is suspended.

Although Rangers are expected to defeat Raith Rovers at home this afternoon, Walter Smith, the manager, is still peeved by the occasions when his side has joined the public in taking victory for granted.

Nonetheless, Rangers have a point more than at the halfway stage last season and their strength will grow. They could soon be able to field Sebastian Rozental, the young Chilean striker, whom the club has agreed to buy from Universidad Católica for £3 million. If he is granted a work permit, Rozental may be able to make his debut in late January.

No such red tape affects Hibernian's activity in the transfer market. The Edinburgh club, who face Kilmarnock at Easter Road this afternoon, have bought Brian Grant, 32, the experienced midfield player, from Aberdeen for £70,000.

Dundee United could be without Kjell Olofsson and Erik Pedersen, two of the Scandinavian signings, but Motherwell, the visitors to Tannadice, are also depleted by injury. Heart of Midlothian are out of form and also lacking Neil Pointon, whose suspension puts him on a substantial list of absentees. They will attempt to recover poise against a buoyant Dunfermline at East End Park.

Record in sight for Ogrizovic

By Our Sports Staff

AFTER the focus on Peter Shilton during the weekend, Steve Ogrizovic, another veteran member of the goalkeepers' union, will reach his own special milestone with Coventry on Saturday. Ogrizovic, who will be 40 next September, will break the 26-year-old club appearance record of 543 games held by George Curtis, the former captain, when he plays in the home FA Carling Premiership match against Middlesbrough.

It will be a particularly remarkable achievement as Ogrizovic did not play his first game for Coventry until a month away from his 27th birthday, after a £72,000 move from Shrewsbury Town in the summer of 1984.

Ogrizovic had previously spent 4½ years in the reserves at Liverpool as understudy, mainly to Ray Clemence, but has made up for lost time since his switch to Highfield Road. The highlight of his career was the 1987 FA Cup Final triumph over Tottenham Hotspur, when, ironically, Curtis was part of the Coventry management team alongside John Sillett.

This season Ogrizovic has been Coventry's most consistent performer, still pulling off outstanding saves such as the one-handed effort that kept out Alan Shearer's downward header in Coventry's 2-1 success over Newcastle United last week.

Ogrizovic said: "To beat George Curtis's record means a tremendous amount to me. I couldn't have envisaged it when I first signed for Coventry and I will be very proud when it happens.

"George is a folk hero in these parts for what he has done for Coventry. Not only did he play an enormous number of games, but he was also an inspirational captain and a vital member of the management team when we won the FA Cup."

More than half of the seats on the new Football League board of directors will be contested. While the three places reserved for first division clubs were agreed last week — going to David Sheepshanks, of Ipswich Town, Ian Stott, of Oldham Athletic, and Ron Noades, of Crystal Palace — in the lower divisions so far only John Bowler, the chairman of Crewe Alexandra, can be sure of his place.

TODAY'S FIXTURES

FOOTBALL

Kick-off 3.00 unless stated
* denotes all-ticket match
pools coupon numbers in brackets

FA Carling Premiership

(1) Aston Villa v Chelsea
(2) Blackburn v Newcastle
(3) Leeds v Coventry
(4) Liverpool v Leicester
(5) Middlesbrough v Everton
(6) Nottingham Forest v Man Utd
(—) Sheff Wed v Arsenal (5.45)
(7) Sunderland v Derby
(8) Tottenham v Southampton (noon)
(9) Wimbledon v West Ham (noon)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Liverpool	19	11	5	3	36	18	38
Arsenal	18	10	5	3	35	18	35
Wimbledon	18	10	4	4	30	22	34
A Villa	18	10	3	5	27	15	33
Man Utd	18	8	7	3	37	25	31
Newcastle	18	9	4	5	33	20	31
Everton	18	7	7	4	26	20	28
Chelsea	18	7	7	4	28	27	28
Sheff Wed	18	6	8	4	19	20	26
Tottenham	18	7	4	7	18	18	25
Derby	18	5	7	6	20	23	22
Leeds	18	6	4	8	15	20	22
Leicester	18	6	3	9	17	24	21
Sunderland	18	5	5	8	17	26	20
West Ham	18	4	6	8	16	25	18
Southampton	18	4	4	10	27	33	16
Coventry	18	3	7	8	14	24	16
Middlesbro	18	3	6	9	21	33	15
Blackburn	17	2	7	8	16	22	13
Nottm F	18	2	7	9	16	30	13

UNIBOND LEAGUE: Premier division: Accrington Stanley v Bamber Bridge; Alfreton Town v Leek Town; Blyth Spartans v Guiseley; Colwyn Bay v Knowsley; Emley v Frickley Athletic; Gainsborough v Boston United; Hyde v Buxton; Lancaster v Barrow; Marine v Chorley; Spennymoor v Bishop Auckland; Witton v Winsford. First division: Ashton United v Congleton; Atherton Laburnum Rovers v Netherfield; Curzon Ashton v Radcliffe Borough; Farsley Celtic v Stocksbridge PS (12.0); Flixton v Droylsden (11.0); Gretna v Whitley Bay (1.0); Harrogate Town v Bradford Park Avenue; Leigh v Workington; Lincoln United v Worksop (11.30); Matlock Town v Eastwood Town; Warrington v Great Harwood.

FEDERATION BREWERY NORTHERN LEAGUE: First division: Shildon v West Auckland; Whitby v Guisborough.

Nationwide League
First division

(10) Bradford v Sheff Utd
(11) Grimsby v Bolton
(12) Ipswich v Crystal Palace
(13) Man City v Port Vale
(14) Oldham v Birmingham (1.0)
(15) * Portsmouth v Swindon
(16) QPR v Norwich (noon)
(17) Reading v West Bromwich
(18) Southend v Charlton (noon)
(19) Stoke v Barnsley
(20) Tranmere v Huddersfield
(21) Wolverhampton v Oxford Utd

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Barnsley	23	12	8	3	42	26	44
Bolton	24	11	10	3	48	34	43
Sheff Utd	24	12	6	6	40	25	42
C Palace	24	10	9	5	42	24	39
Wolvrhmptn	23	10	6	7	31	22	36
Oxford Utd	24	9	7	8	34	25	34
QPR	24	9	7	8	31	29	34
Stoke	22	9	7	6	30	31	34
Port Vale	24	8	10	6	22	24	34
Norwich	23	9	6	8	30	33	33
Birmingham	23	8	9	6	24	22	33
Tranmere	24	9	5	10	31	31	32
Swindon	24	9	3	12	34	32	30
Ipswich	24	7	9	8	30	34	30
Portsmth	24	8	6	10	26	30	30
West Brom	23	6	11	6	36	37	29
Charlton	23	9	2	12	24	32	29
Huddersfld	24	7	7	10	27	33	28
Reading	24	7	7	10	25	33	28
Man City	23	8	2	13	27	37	26
Oldham	24	6	8	10	26	29	26
Southend	24	5	10	9	24	41	25
Bradford	24	5	8	11	22	38	23
Grimsby	23	5	7	11	25	42	22

GILBERT LEAGUE OF WALES: Bangor City v Cemaes Bay; Barry v Inter Cable-Tel (11.30); Carmarthen Town v Briton Ferry; Connah's Quay v Llansantffraid; Ebbw Vale v Cwmbran; Flint Town v Holywell (1.0); Newtown v Caersws; Porthmadog v Caernarfon; Rhyl v Conwy; Welshpool v Aberystwyth.

ESSEX SENIOR LEAGUE: Premier division: Basildon U v Bowers; Hullbridge Sports v Concord; Sawbridgeworth v Stansted; Southend Manor v Great Wakering.

WINSTONLEAD KENT LEAGUE: First division: Beckenham v Cray (11.30); Chatham v Crockenhill; Faversham v Deal (11.0); Furness v Lordswood (12.0); Ramsgate v Folkestone Invicta (11.0).

Second division

(22) * Blackpool v Burnley
(23) Bournemouth
v Bristol Rovers (noon)
(24) Bristol City v Shrewsbury (noon)
(25) Bury v Crewe
(26) Chesterfield v Rotherham (noon)
(27) Gillingham v Luton (noon)
(28) Millwall v Peterborough (noon)
(29) Plymouth v Brentford
(30) Watford v Notts County (noon)
(31) Wrexham v Stockport
(32) Wycombe v Walsall
(33) York v Preston

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Brentford	24	12	8	4	37	24	44
Luton	23	13	4	6	41	25	43
Bury	23	11	8	4	35	22	41
Millwall	24	11	8	5	33	24	41
Wrexham	22	10	8	4	29	24	38
Stockport	24	10	8	6	29	25	38
Watford	23	9	11	3	25	19	38
Chestrfld	23	11	5	7	23	18	38
Burnley	24	11	4	9	33	27	37
Crewe	23	12	1	10	32	27	37
Bristol City	23	9	7	7	38	26	34
Shrewsbury	24	7	8	9	30	37	29
Bristol R	24	7	8	9	26	23	29
Preston	24	8	5	11	24	27	29
York	23	8	5	10	24	32	29
Blackpool	24	6	10	8	25	27	28
Plymouth	24	6	9	9	22	34	27
Walsall	23	7	6	10	24	25	27
Gillingham	24	7	6	11	23	29	27
Bournmth	24	7	6	11	22	29	27
Peterboro	24	5	9	10	35	43	24
Wycombe	24	6	5	13	22	36	23
Notts Co	23	5	6	12	15	26	21
Rotherham	23	3	7	13	13	35	16

SCREWFIX DIRECT LEAGUE: Premier division: Bristol Manor Farm v Mangotsfield; Backwell v Bridlington; Barnstaple v Bideford; Bridport v Bridgwater; Calne v Chippenham; Westbury v Odd Down; Tiverton v Elmore.

JEWSON EASTERN COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Bury Town v Diss (12.0); Felixstowe P and T v Woodbridge (11.0); Gorleston v Great Yarmouth (11.0); Hadleigh U v Stowmarket (11.0); Halstead v Tiptree (11.0); Harwich and Parkeston v Clacton (11.0); Soham v Newmarket (11.0); Sudbury Wanderers v Sudbury Town Res (11.0); Watton v Fakenham (11.0); Wisbech v March (11.0); Wroxham v Lowestoft (11.0).

Third division

(34) Barnet v Mansfield (1.0)
(35) Brighton v Colchester (noon)
(36) Cambridge Utd v Scunthorpe
(37) Cardiff v Torquay
(38) Carlisle v Hartlepool
(39) Chester v Rochdale
(—) Doncaster v Scarborough
(—) Fulham v Exeter (noon)
(—) Hereford v Swansea
(—) Hull v Lincoln
(—) Leyton Orient v Northampton (noon)
(—) Wigan v Darlington

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Fulham	24	16	4	4	39	17	52
Carlisle	24	13	7	4	38	24	46
Cambs Utd	24	13	5	6	36	30	44
Wigan	23	12	5	6	40	25	41
Chester	23	10	6	7	27	25	36
Swansea	23	10	5	8	27	26	35
Scunthrpe	24	10	4	10	34	34	34
Northmptn	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	32	27	34
Cardiff	22	10	4	8	26	24	34
Torquay	24	10	4	10	26	26	34
Colchester	24	7	12	5	33	29	33
Barnet	23	8	8	7	24	19	32
Hull	24	7	11	6	23	26	32
Lincoln	24	8	7	9	30	36	31
Scarboro	23	7	9	7	32	30	30
Rochdale	23	7	8	8	29	29	29
Hartlpool	23	6	5	12	22	30	23
Mansfield	23	5	13	5	24	24	28
L Orient	23	7	7	9	19	20	28
Exeter	24	7	5	12	23	34	26
Doncaster	23	7	3	13	25	36	24
Hereford	24	5	8	11	25	35	23
Darlington	24	6	4	14	32	44	22
Brighton	24	4	4	16	21	44	14

Vauxhall Conference

(—) Altrincham v Macclesfield
(—) Farnborough v Bath
(—) Gateshead v Stalybridge
(—) Halifax v Northwich
(—) Hayes v Woking
(—) Kettering v Rushden and Diamonds
(—) Kidderminster
v Bromsgrove (11.30)
(—) Southport v Morecambe
(—) Stevenage v Slough
(—) Telford v Hednesford
(—) Welling v Dover (11.30)

BANKS'S BREWERY LEAGUE: Premier division: Bradley Town v Gornal Ath; Darlaston v Wolverhampton United; Ludlow T v Stourport S; Lye Town v Ettingshall [illegible]; [illegible] Tividale v Hill Top R; Walsall Wood v Bloxwich S; [illegible] v Malvern T.

Bell's Scottish League
Premier division

(40) Aberdeen v Celtic (7.45)
(41) Dundee Utd v Motherwell
(42) Dunfermline v Hearts
(43) Hibernian v Kilmarnock
(44) Rangers v Raith

First division

(45) East Fife v St Mirren (2.0)
(46) Greenock Morton v Clydebank
(47) Partick v Dundee
(48) St Johnstone v Falkirk

Second division

(49) Ayr v Hamilton
(—) Dumbarton v Stranraer

Third division

(—) Albion v Forfar
(—) Arbroath v Ross County

DR MARTENS LEAGUE: Premier division: Ashford v Sittingbourne (11.0); Burton v Gresley (11.30); Gloucester v Cheltenham; Gravesend and Northfleet v Chelmsford (11.30); Halesowen v Worcester City; Hastings v Crawley; King's Lynn v Cambridge City; Merthyr v Newport AFC (12.0); Nuneaton v Atherstone (12.0); Salisbury v Dorchester; Sudbury v Baldock. Midland division: Bilston v Stourbridge; Grantham v Corby (11.30); Ilkeston v Hinckley Town; Raunds v Rothwell (11.30); Redditch v Evesham (12.0); Shepshed Dynamo v Tamworth (11.0); Solihull Borough v Moor Green (12.0); Stafford v Dudley Town; Sutton Coldfield v Paget Rangers (11.0); VS Rugby v Sedworth (12.0). Southern division: Bashley v Havant; Erith and Belvedere v Dartford (12.0); Fareham v Waterlooville; Forest Green v Cinderford; Margate v St Leonards; Tonbridge v Fisher; Trowbridge v Witney; Weston-super-Mare v Clevedon (11.30); Weymouth v Newport (IoW) (2.15); Yate v Cirencester (11.30).

ENDSLEIGH INSURANCE MIDLAND COMBINATION: Premier division (11.30): Coventry Sphinx v Massey Ferguson; Handrahan Timbers v Bilston Community College; Highgate v Kings Heath; Knowle v Coleshill; Meir KA v Boldmere S; Richmond Swifts v Shirley; Southam v Kenilworth; Studley BKL v Alvechurch; Wellesbourne v Worcester; West Midland Fire Service v David Lloyd.

ICIS LEAGUE: Premier division: Aylesbury v Hendon (11.0); Boreham Wood v Bishop's Stortford (12.30); Bromley v Dulwich (noon); Carshalton v Sutton United (noon); Dagenham and Red v Heybridge; Grays v Purfleet (11.0); Harrow v Enfield; Hitchin v St Albans (12.0); Kingstonian v Chertsey (11.0); Staines v Yeading (11.30); Yeovil v Oxford City. First division: Basingstoke v Aldershot Town; Berkhamsted v Barton Rovers; Canvey Island v Billericay; Croydon v Whyteleafe; Maidenhead United v Hampton; Marlow v Uxbridge; Molesey v Walton and Hersham; Thame v Abingdon Town; Wokingham v Chesham; Worthing v Bognor Regis. Second division: Banstead v Horsham; Barking v Tilbury; Bedford T v Leighton Town; Bracknell v Hungerford; Chalfont St Peter v H Hempstead; Collier Row and Romford v Ware; Dorking v Leatherhead; Windsor and Eton v Egham; Wivenhoe v Witham. Third division: Aveley v Clapton; East Thurrock v Braintree; Hertford v Harlow; Lewes v Epsom and Ewell; Tring v Southall; Wealdstone v Northwood; Wingate and Finchley v Kingsbury.

NORTH WEST COUNTIES LEAGUE: First division: Blackpool Rovers v Darwen; Burscough v Bootle; Chadderton v Atherton Collieries; Clitheroe v Rossendale; Eastwood H v Newcastle Town (1.0); Glossop North End v Salford; Kidsgrove v Nantwich (12.0); Penrith v Holker Old Boys (2.15); St Helens v Maine Road; Trafford v Mossley; Vauxhall G M v Prescot Cables.

JEWSON WESSEX LEAGUE: First division: Lymington v Brockenhurst (11.30); Andover v Whitchurch (11.30); BAT v Totton (11.30); Bemerton Heath v Downton (12.0); Christchurch v Romsey (11.0); Eastleigh v Aerostructures (11.0); Portsmouth RN v Gosport (11.0); Ryde Sports v East Cowes; Thatcham v Petersfield; Wimborne Town v Bournemouth (11.30).

UHLSPORT UNITED COUNTIES LEAGUE: Premier division: Boston v Holbeach; Bourne v Spalding; Long Buckby v Ford Sports; M Blackstone v Stamford; N Spencer v Cogenhoe; Potton v Stotfold; St Neots v Eynesbury; S and L Corby v Desborough; Wellingborough v Newport Pagnell; Wootton v Kempston.

UNIJET SUSSEX COUNTY LEAGUE: First division (11.0): Arundel v Pagham; Eastbourne Town v Langney Sports; Hassocks v Burgess Hill; Horsham YMCA v Wick; Ringmer v Hailsham; Saltdean v Peacehaven and Telscombe; Selsey v Portfield; Southwick v Shoreham; Three Bridges v Oakwood; Whitehawk v Mile Oak.

INTERLINK EXPRESS ALLIANCE (11.0): Bloxwich Town v Pelsall V; Bridgnorth v Shifnal T; Chasetown v Boldmere St M; Hinckley Athletic v Barwell; Knypersley V v Rocester; Oldbury U v Halesowen H; Pershore T v Stratford T; Rushall O v Blakenhall; Stapenhill v W Mid Police; Willenhall v Sandwell.

SMIRNOFF IRISH LEAGUE: Premier division: Ards v Cliftonville; Crusaders v Coleraine; Glenavon v Portadown; Linfield v Glentoran. First division: Ballymena v Omagh; Carrick v Ballyclare; Larne v Distillery; Newry v Bangor.

RUGBY UNION

Club matches

Bridgend v Moseley (2.30)
Hartlepool Rovers
v West Hartlepool (2.15)
Hawick v Jed-Forest (2.0)
Kelso v Selkirk (2.0)
Melrose v Gala (2.0)
Northampton v Stirling County (3.0)
Redruth v Camborne (2.30)
Stourbridge
v Dudley Kingswinford (2.30)

CANCELLED: Newcastle v Northern.

RUGBY LEAGUE

Club matches

Batley v Dewsbury (noon)
Huddersfield v Keighley (1.0)
Leeds v Halifax (11.30)
Wigan v St Helens (3.0)

POSTPONED: Workington v Carlisle

OTHER SPORT

ICE HOCKEY: Superleague: Basingstoke v Nottingham (3.0); Sheffield v Cardiff (2.30).

RACING: Hereford (1.05); Huntingdon (12.30); Kempton Park (12.40); Market Rasen (12.30); Sedgefield (12.40); Wetherby (12.45); Wolverhampton (1.0); Lingfield Park (12.50). Abandoned: Ayr; Newton Abbot; Wincanton.

THE [illegible] TIMES
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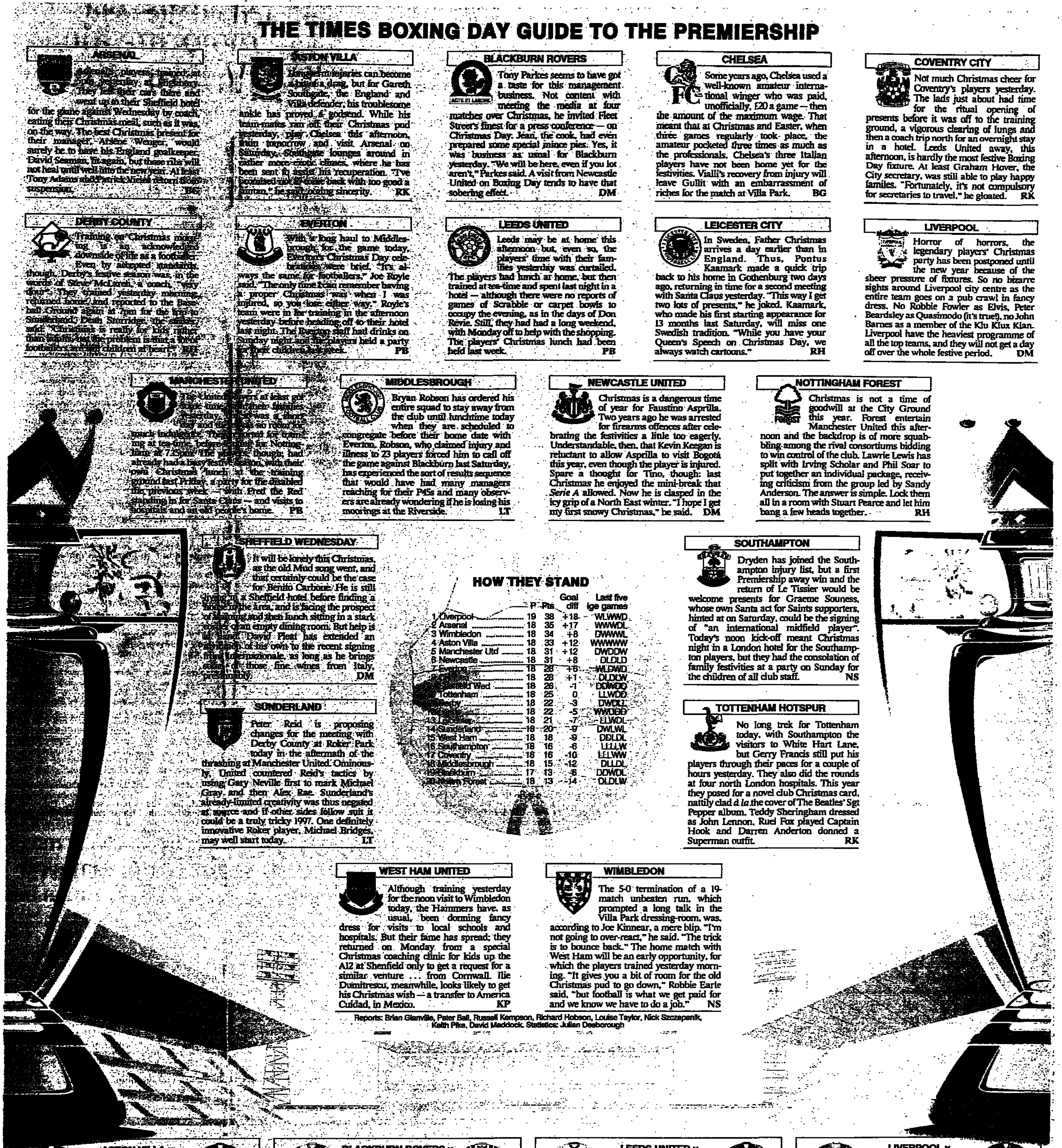


ARSENAL

Arsenal's players trained at 2pm yesterday at Highbury. They left their cars there and went up to their Sheffield hotel for the game against Wednesday by coach, eating their Christmas meal, such as it was, on the way. The best Christmas present for their manager, Arsène Wenger, would surely be to have his England goalkeeper, David Seaman, fit again, but these ribs will not heal until well into the new year. At least Tony Adams and Patrick Vieira return from suspension. **BG**

ASTON VILLA

Long-term injuries can become a bit of a drag, but for Gareth Southgate, the England and Villa defender, his troublesome ankle has proved a godsend. While his team-mates ran off their Christmas pud yesterday, play Chelsea this afternoon, train tomorrow and visit Arsenal on Saturday, Southgate lounges around in rather more exotic climes, where he has been sent to assist his recuperation. "I've promised not to come back with too good a suntan," he said, oozing sincerity. **RK**

BLACKBURN ROVERS

Tony Parkes seems to have got a taste for this management business. Not content with meeting the media at four matches over Christmas, he invited Fleet Street's finest for a press conference — on Christmas Day. Jean, the cook, had even prepared some special *mince* pies. Yes, it was business as usual for Blackburn yesterday. "We will be here, even if you lot aren't," Parkes said. A visit from Newcastle United on Boxing Day tends to have that sobering effect. **DM**

CHELSEA

Some years ago, Chelsea used a well-known amateur international winger who was paid, unofficially, £20 a game — then the amount of the maximum wage. That meant that at Christmas and Easter, when three games regularly took place, the amateur pocketed *three* times as much as the professionals. Chelsea's three Italian players have not been home yet for the festivities. Vialli's recovery from injury will leave Gullit with an embarrassment of riches for the match at Villa Park. **BG**

COVENTRY CITY

Not much Christmas cheer for Coventry's players yesterday. The lads just about had time for the ritual opening of presents before it was off to the training ground, a vigorous clearing of lungs and then a coach trip north for an overnight stay in a hotel. Leeds United away, this afternoon, is hardly the most festive Boxing Day fixture. At least Graham Hover, the City secretary, was still able to play happy familes. "Fortunately, it's *not* compulsory for secretaries to travel," he gloated. **RK**

DERBY COUNTY

Training on Christmas morning is an acknowledged downside of life as a footballer. Even by accepted standards, though, Derby's festive season was, in the words of Steve McLaren, a coach, "very dour". They trained yesterday morning, returned home, and reported to the Baseball Ground again at 7pm for the trip to Sunderland. Dean Sturridge, the striker, said: "Christmas is really for kids rather than adults, but the problem is that a lot of footballers are still children at heart." **RH**

EVERTON

With a long haul to Middlesbrough for the game today, Everton's Christmas Day celebrations were brief. "It's always the same for footballers," Joe Royle said. "The only time I can remember having a proper Christmas was when I was injured, so you lose either way." Royle's team were in for training in the afternoon yesterday before heading off to their hotel last night. The Everton staff had drinks on Sunday night and the players held a party for their children last week. **PB**

LEEDS UNITED

Leeds may be at home this afternoon but, even so, the players' time with their families yesterday was curtailed. The players had lunch at home, but then trained at tea-time and spent last night in a hotel — although there were no reports of games of Scrabble or carpet bowls to occupy the evening, as in the days of Don Revie. Still, they had had a long weekend, with Monday off to help with the shopping. The players' Christmas lunch had been held last week. **PB**

LEICESTER CITY

In Sweden, Father Christmas arrives a day earlier than in England. Thus, Pontus Kaamark made a quick trip back to his home in Gothenburg two days ago, returning in time for a second meeting with Santa Claus yesterday. "This way I get two lots of presents," he joked. Kaamark, who made his first starting appearance for 13 months last Saturday, will miss one Swedish tradition. "While you have your Queen's Speech on Christmas Day, we always watch cartoons." **RH**

LIVERPOOL

Horror of horrors, the legendary players' Christmas party has been postponed until the new year because of the sheer pressure of fixtures. So *no* bizarre sights around Liverpool city centre as the entire team goes on a pub crawl in fancy dress. No Robbie Fowler as Elvis, Peter Beardsley as Quasimodo (it's true!), no John Barnes as a member of the Klu Klux Klan. Liverpool have the heaviest programme of all the top teams, and they will not get a day off over the whole festive period. **DM**

MANCHESTER UNITED

The United players at least got some time with their families yesterday. It was a short day and there was no room for much indulgence. They reported for training at tea-time, before leaving for Nottingham at 7.15pm. The players, though, had already had a busy festive season, with their own Christmas lunch at the training ground last Friday, a party for the disabled the previous week — with Fred the Red standing in for Santa Claus — and visits to hospitals and an old people's home. **PB**

MIDDLESBROUGH

Bryan Robson has ordered his entire squad to stay away from the club until lunchtime today when they are scheduled to congregate before their home date with Everton. Robson, who claimed injury and illness to 23 players forced him to call off the game against Blackburn last Saturday, has experienced the sort of results sequence that would have had many managers reaching for their P45s and many observers are already wondering if he is losing his moorings at the Riverside. **LT**

NEWCASTLE UNITED

Christmas is a dangerous time of year for Faustino Asprilla. Two years ago he was arrested for firearms offences after celebrating the festivities a little too eagerly. Understandable, then, that Kevin Keegan is reluctant to allow Asprilla to visit Bogotá this year, even though the player is injured. Spare a thought for Tino, though: last Christmas he enjoyed the mini-break that *Serie A* allowed. Now he is clasped in the icy grip of a North East winter. "I hope I get my first snowy Christmas," he said. **DM**

NOTTINGHAM FOREST

Christmas is not a time of goodwill at the City Ground this year. Forest entertain Manchester United this afternoon and the backdrop is of more squabbling among the rival consortiums bidding to win control of the club. Lawrie Lewis has split with Irving Scholar and Phil Soar to put together an individual package, receiving criticism from the group led by Sandy Anderson. The answer is simple. Lock them all in a room with Stuart Pearce and let him bang a few heads together. **RH**

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY

It will be lonely this Christmas, as the old Mud song went, and that certainly could be the case for Benito Carbone. He is still living in a Sheffield hotel before finding a house in the area, and is facing the prospect of waking and then lunch sitting in a stark corner of an empty dining room. But help is at hand. David Pleat has extended an invitation of his own to the recent signing from Internazionale, as long as he brings some of those fine wines from Italy, presumably. **DM**

SUNDERLAND

Peter Reid is proposing changes for the meeting with Derby County at Roker Park today in the aftermath of the thrashing at Manchester United. Ominously, United countered Reid's tactics by using Gary Neville first to mark Michael Gray and then Alex Rae. Sunderland's already-limited creativity was thus negated at source and if other sides follow suit it could be a truly tricky 1997. One definitely innovative Roker player, Michael Bridges, may well start today. **LT**

HOW THEY STAND

	P	Pts	Goal diff	Last five lge games
1 Liverpool	19	38	+18	WLWWD
2 Arsenal	18	35	+17	WWWDL
3 Wimbledon	18	34	+8	DWWWL
4 Aston Villa	18	33	+12	WWWWW
5 Manchester Utd	18	31	+12	DWDDW
6 Newcastle	18	31	+8	DLDLD
7 Everton	18	28	+6	WLDWD
8 Chelsea	18	28	+1	DLDLW
9 Sheffield Wed	18	26	-1	DDWDD
10 Tottenham	18	25	0	LLWDD
11 Derby	18	22	-3	DWDLL
12 Leeds	18	22	-5	WWDDD
13 Leicester	18	21	-7	LLWDL
14 Sunderland	18	20	-9	DWLWL
15 West Ham	18	18	-9	DDLDL
16 Southampton	18	16	-6	LLLLW
17 Coventry	18	16	-10	LLLWW
18 Middlesbrough	18	15	-12	DLLDL
19 Blackburn	17	13	-6	DDWDL
20 Nottm Forest	18	13	-14	DLDLW

SOUTHAMPTON

Dryden has joined the Southampton injury list, but a first Premiership away win and the return of Le Tissier would be welcome presents for Graeme Souness, whose own Santa act for Saints supporters, hinted at on Saturday, could be the signing of "an international midfield player". Today's noon kick-off meant Christmas night in a London hotel for the Southampton players, but they had the consolation of family festivities at a party on Sunday for the children of all club staff. **NS**

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR

No long trek for Tottenham today, with Southampton the visitors to White Hart Lane, but Gerry Francis still put his players through their paces for a couple of hours yesterday. They also did the rounds at four north London hospitals. This year they posed for a novel club Christmas card, nattily clad *à la* the cover of The Beatles' Sgt Pepper album. Teddy Sheringham dressed as John Lennon, Ruel Fox played Captain Hook and Darren Anderton donned a Superman outfit. **RK**

WEST HAM UNITED

Although training yesterday for the noon visit to Wimbledon today, the Hammers have, as usual, been donning fancy dress for visits to local schools and hospitals. But their fame has spread; they returned on Monday from a special Christmas coaching clinic for kids up the A12 at Shenfield only to get a request for a similar venture ... from Cornwall. Ilie Dumitrescu, meanwhile, looks likely to get his Christmas wish — a transfer to America Cuidad, in Mexico. **KP**

WIMBLEDON

The 5-0 termination of a 19-match unbeaten run, which prompted a long talk in the Villa Park dressing-room, was, according to Joe Kinnear, a mere blip. "I'm not going to over-react," he said. "The trick is to bounce back." The home match with West Ham will be an early opportunity, for which the players trained yesterday morning. "It gives you a bit of room for the old Christmas pud to go down," Robbie Earle said, "but football is what we get paid for and we know we have to do a job." **NS**

Reports: Brian Glanville, Peter Ball, Russell Kempson, Richard Hobson, Louise Taylor, Nick Szczepanik, Keith Pike, David Maddock. Statistics: Julian Desborough

ASTON VILLA v CHELSEA

TICKETS: sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-0, —, —, 1-0, 2-2, 3-1, 1-3, 1-0, 3-0, 0-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

ASTON VILLA (from): Bosnich, Oakes, Nelson, Wright, Scimeca, Staunton, Ehiogu, Townsend, Draper, Taylor, Yorke, Milosevic, Joachim, Johnson, Tiler, Curcic.

CHELSEA (from): Grodas, Hitchcock, Colgan, Petrescu, Phelan, Johnson, Sinclair, Clarke, Leboeuf, Clement, Myers, Burley, Minto, Newton, Duberry, Di Matteo, Zola, Nicholls, Gullit, Hughes.

BLACKBURN ROVERS v NEWCASTLE UNITED

TICKETS: sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, 2-0, 0-1, 3-1, —, 1-0, 1-0, 2-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

BLACKBURN (from): Given, Kenna, Hendry, Berg, Le Saux, Gallacher, Sherwood, Bohinen, Wilcox, McKinlay, Sutton, Flowers, Marker, Donis, Croft, Gudmundsson, Flitcroft, Duff, Broomes.

NEWCASTLE (from): Srnicek, Watson, Elliott, Peacock, Albert, Lee, Gillespie, Ginola, Beardsley, Shearer, Ferdinand, Hislop, Kitson, Clark, Barton, Brayson.

LEEDS UNITED v COVENTRY CITY

TICKETS: seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, —, —, 2-0, 2-0, 2-2, 1-0, 3-0, 3-1

HOW THEY LINE UP

LEEDS (from): Martyn, Kelly, Palmer, Beesley, Radebe, Halle, Sharpe, Wallace, Ford, Bowyer, Rush, Deane, Yeboah, Wetherall, Harte, Kewell, Jackson, Couzens, Beeney.

COVENTRY (from): Ogrizovic, Telfer, Daish, Dublin, Shaw, Williams, Richardson, McAllister, Salako, Whelan, Huckerby, Jess, Borrows, Boland, Genaux, Filan.

LIVERPOOL v LEICESTER CITY

TICKETS: sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 4-3, —, —, —, —, —, —, —, 2-0, —

HOW THEY LINE UP

LIVERPOOL (from): James, Babb, Bjornebye, Wright, Ruddock, McAteer, McManaman, Collymore, Fowler, Barnes, Thomas, Matteo, Warner, Berger, Kennedy, L Jones.

LEICESTER (from): Keller, Grayson, Watts, Prior, Kaamark, Marshall, Izzet, Lennon, Parker, Claridge, Taylor, Heskey, Campbell, Wilson, Poole, Lawrence, Lewis.

MIDDLESBROUGH v EVERTON

TICKETS: sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: —, —, 3-3, —, —, —, 1-2, —, —, 0-2.

HOW THEY LINE UP

MIDDLESBROUGH (from): Walsh, Liddle, Cox, Whyte, Hignett, Emerson, Ravanelli, Fjortoft, Campbell, Beck, Roberts, Morris, Juninho, Vickers, Fleming, Blackmore, Summerbell.

EVERTON (from): Southall, Barrett, Hinchcliffe, Watson, Unsworth, Kanchelskis, Speed, Grant, Parkinson, Ferguson, Branch, Stuart, Barmby, Hottiger, Gerrard, Rideout, Allen, Dunn.

NOTTINGHAM FOREST v MANCHESTER UNITED

TICKETS: sold out

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 0-0, 2-0, 4-0, 1-1, 1-0, 0-2, —, 1-1, 1-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

NOTTINGHAM FOREST (from): Crossley, Lyttle, Pearce, Cooper, Warner, Phillips, Haaland, Woan, Allen, Saunders, Howe, Campbell, Clough, Jerkan, Chettle, Gemmill, Fettis, Roy.

MANCHESTER UNITED (from): Schmeichel, G Neville, May, Irwin, Johnsen, Butt, Scholes, Cantona, Solskjaer, Giggs, Beckham, P Neville, McClair, Poborsky, Cole, Thornley, Van Der Gouw.

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY v ARSENAL

TICKETS: seats available.

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-1, 3-3, 2-1, 1-0, —, 1-1, 1-0, 0-1, 3-1, 1-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SHEFFIELD WEDNESDAY (from): Pressman, Nolan, Nicol, Atherton, Walker, Stefanovic, Pembridge, Whittingham, Hyde, Carbone, Booth, Hirst, Blinker, Clarke, Oakes, Trustfull, Humphreys, Donaldson, Linighan.

ARSENAL (from): Lukic, McGowan, Keown, Adams, Bould, Dixon, Winterburn, Marshall, Garde, Merson, Platt, Bergkamp, Wright, Hartson, Shaw, Morrow, Parlour, Bartram, Rose.

SUNDERLAND v DERBY

TICKETS: seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 1-2, —, —, —, 1-2, 1-1, 1-0, 1-0, 1-1, 3-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

SUNDERLAND (from): Perez, Hall, Kubicki, Melville, Ord, Kelly, Ball, Bracewell, Rae, Gray, Russell, Agnew, Stewart, Aiston, Bridges, Preece.

DERBY COUNTY (from): Hoult, Rowett, McGrath, Stimac, Laursen, Flynn, Asanovic, D Powell, C Powell, Ward, Sturridge, Dailly, Gabbiadini, Willems, Taylor, Carsley, Yates, Carbon.

LEADING SCORERS

14: Ian Wright (Arsenal)
13: Robbie Fowler, (Liverpool) Alan Shearer (Newcastle)
10: Dwight Yorke (Aston Villa)
9: Fabrizio Ravanelli (Middlesbrough)
8: Matthew Le Tissier (Southampton), Ole-Gunnar Solksjaer (Manchester Utd), Efan Ekoku (Wimbledon), Gianluca Vialli (Chelsea).

CHAMPIONSHIP BETTING

5-4: Liverpool, 3-1: Manchester United, 7-2: Arsenal, 5-1: Newcastle, 8-1: Aston Villa. Odds supplied by Ladbrokes

The official internet site of the FA Carling Premiership is at http://www.fa-carling.com/

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR v SOUTHAMPTON

TICKETS: seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 2-0, 2-1, 1-2, 2-1, 2-0, 1-2, 4-2, 3-0, 1-2, 1-0.

HOW THEY LINE UP

TOTTENHAM HOTSPUR (from): Walker, Carr, Campbell, Fox, Calderwood, Wilson, Howells, Nielsen, Dozzell, Sinton, Sheringham, Iversen, Scales, Allen, Nethercott, Rosenthal, Baardsen.

SOUTHAMPTON (from): Beasant, Lundekvam, Van Gobbel, Maddison, Berkovic, Magilton, Oakley, Le Tissier, Slater, Ostenstad, Watson, Potter, Monkou, Benali, Hughes, Neilson.

WIMBLEDON v WEST HAM

TICKETS: seats available

10-YEAR RECORD: 0-1, 1-1, 0-1, —, —, 2-0, —, 1-2, 1-0, 0-1.

HOW THEY LINE UP

WIMBLEDON (from): Sullivan, Cunningham, Blackwell, Perry, Kimble, Ardley, Earle, Jones, Fear, Holdsworth, Leonhardsen, Gayle, Ekoku, McAllister, Harford, Murphy.

WEST HAM (from): Miklosko, Dicks, Williamson, Potts, Bishop, Rieper, Raducioiu, Rowland, Brown, Moncur, Bowen, Hughes, Lampard, Bilic, Porfirio, Newell, Sealey, Omoniymi, Hodges.

WHEN TO WATCH ON TELEVISION

Today

3.30pm: Football preview Sky1
Scores and results

5pm: Football Special Sky 1
Sheffield Wednesday v Arsenal (live)

6pm: Euro 96 - When football came home BBC2

[illegible]

Old and smelly but worth a small fortune

Anyone who found a bright, new pair of the latest sports shoes among their Christmas presents yesterday should think twice before chucking that old pair in the bin. They could be throwing away a fortune.

Amazingly, there are people out there who will pay good money for those crusty, old, worn-down, second-hand trainers — the older and rarer the better. There is a flourishing international market in them, with the highest prices being paid in Japan, where the height of fashion among the young is to be seen in classic sports shoes of the past.

I was alerted to my potential good fortune by an advertisement in the American edition of *Runner's World* that said: "Wanted: vintage running shoes. Up to $1,000 cash paid."

I couldn't believe it. Cash paid for old running shoes? Was it possible that long-term compulsive exercisers like me could be living with uncovered riches boxed away in the loft?

Perhaps I should first make a confession. I am the Imelda Marcos of the training shoe. I reckon to have the biggest collection of used running shoes in private hands. For years, if there was a new model on the market, I was first in line to buy it. For a while, I was even given free shoes by some of the manufacturers, which swelled my collection no end.

I would go anywhere and try on anything in search of the perfect running shoe. Waffles, studs, spikes, air bubbles, pronation plugs — been there, worn that. The best pair of running shoes, the nearest thing to perfection with laces, was always going to be the next pair that I bought. I scoured foreign magazines in search of fresh, mouthwatering models, and even managed to get my feet into some unlikely prototypes that never went into production.

It would be far too painful to try to calculate what this addiction has cost me over the years. Even a spell of coaching the barefoot runner, Zola Budd, failed to cure me of my compulsion to buy and my belief in the magic powers of the cobbler. Zola may not have needed the benefit of shoes to run like a dream, but I certainly did.

My shoes, laced into my life, exist still, some like silent slagheaps on view around my home, others hidden away in vast cardboard boxes. Many caked with mud and down at heel, a few, bought in haste, hardly touched.

I can never throw any of them away. They bring back too many memories — happy and painful. They are a testament to countless nights and days lost pounding parks and tracks in search of the perfect run, the perfect race, in the perfect pair of shoes.

Now, however, prices of second-hand sports shoes have never been higher, especially in Tokyo and Paris, where teenagers are snapping up recycled Reeboks, Adidas, Puma, Converse and, especially, Nike shoes in record numbers.

One of the reasons for the craze is said to be the shoes worn by Tom Hanks's character in *Forrest Gump*. Nike shoes from around 1970, like those he wears in the film, now have a street value of between $200 and $300. If you have old Nikes of this or any other era squirrelled away, you could be in the money, because Nike has now joined that exclusive club of brand names that the Japanese find irresistible.

Bryant, the Imelda Marcos of running shoes, poses with his impressive, and still growing, collection of second-hand trainers

Many working Japanese in their late teens and twenties have high incomes but still live with their parents. They have plenty of money to spend on designer luxuries and sales of Nikes (old and new) are booming. Sales of the brand increased more than 40 per cent there last year to $300 million, making Japan the company's second largest market, after the United States.

While the young snap up vintage shoes to wear as a cult fashion item, paying typically $1,000 for a pair of Nike Air Max Yellows, their parents are buying them as antiques to be put on display in their home. In the United States, a sub-culture of dealers and buyers, advertising in magazines and on the Internet, has sprung up to cater for the market in what they term "retro-sneaker fetishism".

"We want your used athletic shoes. The older the better," pleads Second Chance Sports, of New Hampshire. "I collect Nike, Reeboks and Asics shoes," Curt Crane, of Pittsburgh, announces on the Internet. "I don't care what size, age or shape they are in. Let me know what you have and I'll make you an offer on it."

Mike St Laurent is a shoe lover who both trades and collects vintage trainers. "Any old or bizarre-style running shoes are being bought up for more than the original selling price," he said. "Waffle trainers, Tailwinds, Elites, Oregon Waffles, Internationalists ... some sell in the hundreds of dollars. Most shoes I run across only fetch around 50 bucks, but that's better than being left in a closet to rot."

St Laurent, who used to work for Nike, New Balance and Saucony, talks enthusiastically of parties of Japanese businessmen who fly into Seattle to buy up used trainers in bulk, and of weekly auctions of rare vintages that are conducted on the Internet.

But not everything is for sale. Like any true collector, St Laurent is loath to part with his own treasured archive, whatever the price. I know the feeling. My own beaten-up collection is full of footprints of the past, and it is painful to think of selling them on to strange new feet. I fear the collection will continue to grow.

And, of course, I had this great new pair of Asics for Christmas ....

JOHN BRYANT

Feeling festive motoring along far from home

Lucy Duncan has too much time to spare for eating and sleeping on board *Concert*

I had always known that Christmas this year would be different, but I wasn't planning on it being this different.

We are now six days into our "life without a mast" and under motor aboard the BT Global Challenge yacht, *Concert*, and have got quite used to our new routine in the Southern Ocean en route for Wellington. The pace of life is very different now that we are no longer racing. At the most, only two people are needed on the deck at any one time, so watch times have been cut in half and we have a lot more spare time.

In fact, we now have so much spare time that, instead of being in a permanent state of sleep deprivation, we are now all grossly overslept — it's quite difficult to get out of the habit of going to bed at every possible opportunity.

Christmas has certainly not missed us out in the depths of the Southern Ocean. The boat is plastered in Christmas decorations and an inflatable Santa is more likely to be found at the helm than anyone else. We are also doing our best to continue the Christmas tradition of overeating — mealtimes are a highlight, being one of the few fixed points in the day. Previously we had the excuse that we were burning up calories keeping warm and exercising. We are now above 50 degrees south, it's not cold and we're certainly not exercising as much as we were. However, this doesn't seem to stop us eating huge portions, and enjoying them.

'We're out of the race but we're having an adventure'

Our latest fuelling rendezvous, this time with *Courtaulds International*, provided another excuse to indulge in gluttony. As well as jerry cans full of fuel, they sent us enough chocolate to keep us going until February — not that we intend being out here that long.

As a crew, we have had our highs and lows. The lowest point was when, in order to meet up with *Time and Tide* for more fuel, we had to motor several hours in the wrong direction.

That was a bit much and a tough test for even the most sunny-natured crew member. However, all that was forgotten as they came in sight to remind us again that we are definitely not alone out here. The response of the other crews and messages of support have been quite overwhelming and definitely contribute to making this a memorable adventure.

After all, we may, temporarily be out of the race, but we are certainly still having an adventure and undergoing more of a challenge than we had ever anticipated.

Christmas Day at home starts almost as I write this. With little else to occupy ourselves, we plan at least a 37-hour Christmas Day to cover British and New Zealand time. Our target is to reach the chart that includes New Zealand by the end of Christmas (we have about half an inch to go, or approximately 70 miles). We will then have less than 900 miles to go to the Chatham Islands.

Christmas lunch is planned — salt pork and Christmas pudding with the last of our custard supplies stashed away in readiness.

Finally, we have our Christmas carol tape played through the deck speakers. They have only just been allowed out of the bag (not for us the interminable build-up for Christmas beginning in September), and can have no better setting than a moonlit night in the middle of one of the last truly isolated places on earth.

RUGBY UNION: ADVENT OF PROFESSIONAL GAME HAS HELPED TO KILL OFF TRADITIONAL BOXING DAY FIXTURES

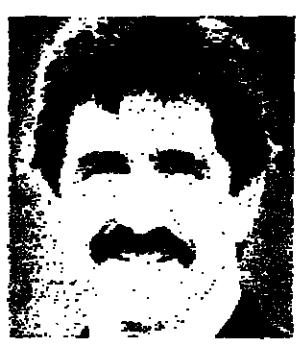
De Glanville fit to lead Bath at Sale

PHIL de Glanville, the Bath and England captain, returns from injury to lead his club in their Courage Clubs Championship match away to Sale on Sunday. De Glanville, who replaces Matt Perry in the centre, has recovered from the thigh strain that prevented him from playing in the international against Argentina earlier this month as well as in Bath's Pilkington Cup defeat of London Irish last weekend.

Moseley, the second division side, could escape punishment for fielding an unregistered player in their defeat away to Bedford last month. Moseley thought that they would have two points deducted when they discovered that Andy Freke, their lock, was still registered with Woodrush, his first club, but English Professional Rugby Union Clubs (Epruc), which organises the league, has now told Moseley they it does not intend to punish them for a what appears to be genuine mistake.

Welsh mourning the loss of Christmas past

GERALD DAVIES



Rugby Union Commentary

THIS is what might be called a decision-making day: even a mould-breaking one. Should I embark towards Abergavenny and take to the hills near by? Ysgyryd Fawr, or "the holy mountain" as some call it, is approachable. Legend has it that the cleft in its ridge was created by Noah's Ark, or later, by the strange forces that were said to have been unleashed at the time of the Crucifixion. The spoilsports prefer to believe that it was caused by a massive landslip. The wind will be keen up there but the views of the Welsh Marches are far from ordinary.

Perhaps I should venture further afield and aim for Machynlleth, where, not far from Plynlimon Mountain, a viewpoint has been erected in memory of Wynford Vaughan Thomas, the broadcaster. The panoramic view from the moorland across the Dyfi Valley and southern Snowdonia was one of his favourite spots. When the air is clear, it is easy to see why he loved the softly majestic scene.

On the other hand, the coast of Pembrokeshire beckons. There is much to see. Friends, though, may choose to play golf. Never before on this day has such a choice to be made. For strange reasons — primarily the overriding importance of league success — there is no rugby today.

This is new. There may have been decisions to be made in the past, but only in so far as which rugby club to visit; which fixture was the most appealing.

Today, no invading host from Pontypridd will travel along the Taff to prove a provincial point against the fancy-dans of Cardiff: Maesteg will not come down the Llynfi Valley to settle old scores with their player-pinching neighbours, Bridgend; nor will rivalries be inflamed as they used to be when Aberavon played Neath. Clubs did not mind travelling provided that the boundaries they crossed were only local ones. And the season's goodwill was not universally guaranteed.

It was no different elsewhere. Gala played Melrose, Redruth went to Camborne, Bath might play Clifton, Coventry against Moseley. This was all pretty straightforward, the pattern clear. There was one oddity. Watsonians, for some obscure reason, inexplicably thought it worth their while to come from Scotland to play Newport and Cardiff over this festive period. It was not the advent of a formal league structure that put paid to this fixture but rather the likely loss of revenue.

The match was forever in danger of being cancelled because of the frost. The decision, with pitch inspections and agonised debates, was always presented as a hard one to call. The Watsonians had arrived; a financial guarantee had been made. The treasurer's need to balance the books had to be weighed against the players' safety. Even in those amateur days, this was no contest. The bottom line mattered.

Players will not clench their teeth nor will applause thunder from the terraces this afternoon. The scoreboard will remain idle, the voices of excitable schoolboys, glowing with yesterday's gifts, will be still. There will be no cheers and handshaking.

There will be no sound of teacups or the tinkle of glasses in the Carwyn James room in Stradey Park while at Cardiff Athletic Club the framed portraits on the wall of noted club men, Bleddyn Williams, Wilf Wooller, the late Les Spence and the rest, will look down upon a tidy uncluttered bar room, and an unknown silence. They, in their playing time, will always have known a Boxing Day fixture, as, until today, everyone else did. The day's rhythms have altered.

And there will be no need to prompt the singing of Christmas carols as the old scallywag, the late Stan Bowes, did. Blue and black to his Cardiff core, the former irascible prop forward paraded the touchline and stimulated the crowd to join in. The spirit was jocular and infectious. The match mattered, but not too much — at least, not until the whistle blew.

To appreciate the full flavour of a Boxing Day game, nowhere proved better than at Llanelli. London Welsh were the visitors. The crowd was packed to bursting: no extra shilling could get you in. The match brought everyone together from far and wide, but the game itself was hardly the main point. It was the occasion for the recycling of old and familiar tales.

"Wel, shwd i ti 'slawer dydd" would be the hale-fellow greeting that would solicit a dozen anecdotes in the language that feels more at home in this club than any other and with which the expatriates could grow familiar once more. It was a homecoming of sorts: the gathering of the tribes.

Students and doctors would be there, teachers and lawyers, too; those who had founded their business on land in London, and all those others who preferred to be discreet and not to give too much away about what they were up to in "the smoke", gathered for gossip and an annual dose of nostalgia. Much like the Middlesex Sevens, it was a pilgrimage. If the Twickenham event has seen better days, Stradey's moment has vanished already into golden memory.

What was important, the renewing of ties and friendship, remains important, but it can no longer be accommodated in the same way. Rugby is more serious and realistic nowadays. It is the fascination with the struggle that matters; the spoils of battle that count.

Players, after all, who are asked to perform after the somnolent day before, may not have seen the funny side of Boxing Day rugby in the way the cigar-puffing crowd always did. So, in these sterner times, we have to let go of some of the fun. Which is another sympton of a changing sport.

SAILING

New mast may slow German bid

THE German maxi, *Morning Glory*, was back in contention in the Sydney to Hobart ocean racing classic after crew members toiled to fit a replacement mast. They had the 110ft carbon fibre spar in place less than 11 hours after it was airlifted from Auckland to Sydney and taken on a crane-equipped barge to a harbourside rigger's yard.

The previous mast snapped high up during the 80ft sloop's first training run for the 630-mile race, which is due to start with a field of around 95 today.

Asked if he would be able to push *Morning Glory* to the limit with the replacement mast if conditions got tough, Barry McKay, the skipper, said: "No, probably not. We'll be backing off a little earlier than normal, I guess."

Morning Glory is second favourite for line honours behind the speedy Australian maxi, *Brindabella*. The Hong Kong-based yacht, *Exile*, is also expected to do well.

Race leaders should sail into Hobart before dawn on Sunday. To break the 21-year-old race record, the winner will have to arrive in less than 2 days 14hr 36min 56sec.

A whale-spotter aircraft will overfly the route to help yachts to avoid collisions. "The accidents can seriously damage boats and injure or kill the whales involved." Gerard Early, an acting director of Wildlife Australia, the Australian government agency, said. "Collisions with whales occur when the whales are surprised by fast-moving vessels which are making less noise than the surrounding water."

☐ Yves Parlier, the lone French sailor, limped into Fremantle, Western Australia, on Tuesday on his stricken yacht, *Aquitaine Innovations*, after a collision with an iceberg during the Vendée Globe race. He was fit and in good spirits, but angry that the collision in the Southern Ocean 19 days ago had forced him out of the single-handed round-the-world event, in which he was the favourite. Parlier's rudders, deck fittings and sails were damaged.

SNOOKER

Resignations leave WPBSA in turmoil

THE struggle to control snooker was further confused this week when Jimmy Chambers and Terry Griffiths resigned from the board of the the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association (WPBSA), the game's governing body.

Chambers, 39, a Walsall snooker club owner, had not been due to stand for re-election for another year, having taken his seat only 12 months ago. In a brief statement, however, he said: "I've been concerned for some time with the direction being taken by the present board and because of this I felt I had no option but to resign."

The decisions, effective from January 23, will be welcomed by opponents of the WPBSA, especially Ian Doyle, a leading critic. Last week Doyle called for the whole board to resign and he will see this latest move as undermining the power-base of Geoff Foulds, who took over from John Spencer as chairman of the WPBSA three weeks ago.

The resignation of Griffiths, a former world champion, as a director will become effective from January 24. Consequently, there will be two vacancies to be filled when the sport's annual meeting is reconvened early in the new year. The original annual meeting was adjourned in Bristol last Thursday when lawyers acting for Doyle discovered that the meeting had been improperly convened. Bill Oliver and Sindhu Pulsirivong, retiring directors, will be attempting to be re-elected.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION (NBA): New York 82 Atlanta 78; Orlando 89 Cleveland 84; Minnesota 107 Utah 98; Chicago 113 New Jersey 81; Houston 76 Milwaukee 81; San Antonio 79 Miami 90; Phoenix 109 Denver 112; Portland 94 Washington 106; Sacramento 100 LA Clippers 88.
BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Chester 87 Leicester 82; Birmingham 88 Worthing 71

CRICKET

PORT ELIZABETH: Tour match: Indians 335 (S Ganguly 97, V Rathore 71, S Tendulkar 62) and 130-2 (V Rathore 64, R Dravid 50 not out). Eastern Province 322-4 dec (K Wessels 103 not out, P Amm 81). Match drawn

FOOTBALL

AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First division: Wimbledon 2 Chelsea 1.
PONTINS CENTRAL LEAGUE: Premier division: Manchester Utd 2 Derby 2. **Pontins Cup: Group three:** Manchester C 1 Tranmere 0; Stoke 3 Wrexham 2. **Group five:** Notts Co 1 Leicester 0
FA YOUTH CUP: Second round replay: Gravesend and Northfleet 2 Enfield 0
SCHOOLS MATCHES: FA Premier League Under-19 Trophy: Lancashire 2 Yorkshire 0; Kent 3 Middlesex 0. FA Premier League Under-16 Trophy: Kent 3 Surrey 2; Inner London 1 Norfolk 2. London Under-15 Cup: Kent 0 Surrey 0; Inner London 3 Norfolk 0. English Knowles Under-14 Cup: Kent 8 Surrey 2; Inner London 6, Norfolk 0. St Clement Danes Trophy: Kent 0, Middlesex 1
WELSH FA WOMEN'S CUP: Quarter-final draw: Bangor City v Gowerton, Barry Town v Newport Strikers, Newcastle Emlyn v Wrexham, Newtown v [illegible] Newport A. Ties to be played on February 2

HOCKEY

SCOTTISH INDOOR CUP: Preliminary round: Perthshire 6 Stirling 5, Grangemouth 5 Glasgow University 0. First round: Insights [illegible] 13 Stags 1, Independent Western 5 Watsonians 0, Tarbrax Wanderers 17 Perthshire 5, Inverleith 11 Grangemouth 5, Gordonians 5 Strathclyde 2, Grange 5 [illegible] Road 0, MIM 10 Clydesdale 2, Gala Kelburne 20 [illegible] Carnegie 5. Quarter-finals: Tarbrax 6 Independent 2, Insights 9 Inverleith 2, Gordonians 5 Grange 4, MIM 14 Gala 1. Women: Preliminary round: Clydesdale 6 Portobello 3, Edinburgh Ladies 7 Aberdeen Bon Accord 1
SCOTTISH INDOOR SHIELD: Quarter-finals: Stags 3 Glasgow University 1, Perthshire 3 Stirling 5. Semi-final: Stags 9 Grangemouth 5. Women: Final: Aberdeen Bon Accord 3 Portobello 2

RUGBY UNION

EMERGING WALES (v United States at Newport, January 1): **M Back** (Swansea), **G Evans** (Llanelli), **M Taylor** (Swansea), **N Davies** (Llanelli, captain), **G Wyatt** (Pontypridd), **L Jarvis** (Cardiff), **P John** (Pontypridd), **N Eynon** (Pontypridd), **G Jenkins** (Swansea), **L Mustoe** (Cardiff), **A Gibbs** (Llanelli), **C Quinnell** (Richmond), **P Arnold** (Swansea), **N Thomas** (Bath), **C Wyatt** (Llanelli)

ICE HOCKEY

NATIONAL LEAGUE (NHL): Boston 3 Chicago 3; Montreal 0 Ottawa 6; New Jersey 2 Buffalo 3; NY Islanders 3 Florida 4; Tampa Bay 1 Washington 3; Toronto 5 Pittsburgh 6; Dallas 1 San Jose 2; Colorado 4 Calgary 3; Anaheim 1 Phoenix 2; Vancouver 0 Edmonton 7

SAILING

BT GLOBAL CHALLENGE: Distance to Wellington (1350 GMT, December 25): 1, Group 4 645 miles; 2, Save The Children 684; 3, Toshiba Wave Warrior 777; 4, Global Teamwork 806; 5, Motorola 845; 6, Pause To Remember 871; 7, Commercial Union 876; 8, Nuclear Electric 882; 9, Ocean Rover 1,032; 10, Time & Tide 1,116; 11, 3Com 1,129; 12, Courtaulds 1,171; 13, Concert 1,235; 14, Heath Insured II 1,409

SWIMMING

BORDEAUX: Grand prix meeting: Men: 100m freestyle: 1, C Tröger (Ger) 51.30sec; 2, J Scot (Fr) 52.30; 3, N Kintz (Fr) 52.56. 200m individual medley: 1, C Keller (Ger) 2min 04.50sec; 2, C Poncaud (Fr) 2:11.48; 3, G German (Fr) 2:12.23. Women: 100m freestyle: 1, J [illegible] (Fr) 58.91sec; 2, L Chouque (Fr) 59.05; 3, S Jacquier (Fr) 59.49. 200m individual medley: 1, M Moravcova (Slovakia) 2min 18.57sec; 2, M Smith (Ire) 2:22.80; 3, P Lerhun (Fr) 2:25.97

POOLS DIVIDENDS

LITTLEWOODS: Treble chance (max 22pts): 22pts — 15 prizes of £80,902; 21 — 424 prizes of £234; 20 — 6,253 prizes of £17.30; 19 — 54,552 prizes of £3.35. Half-time result: £250,000 shared by winners in Derbyshire and West Midlands
VERNONS: Treble chance (max 22pts) 22pts — £20,654.00; 21 — £97.40; 20 — £13.40. Super shots: £134.55. Premier 10: £448.55
ZETTERS: Treble chance: 22pts — £25,599.75; 21 — £24.65; 20 — £1.85. Four aways: £5.50. Eight homes: £22.80. Four draws: £20.40. Super 7: £579.20. Lucky numbers: 4, 19, 14, 34, 11, 24

BASKETBALL

Jordan's bullish form sustains winning run

MICHAEL JORDAN and Scottie Pippen combined for 20 points in a second-quarter run as Chicago Bulls rebounded from a 16-point first-quarter deficit to trounce New Jersey Nets 113-81. Jordan finished with 24 points and Pippen 20 for Chicago, who have won seven straight games.

Kendall Gill and Kerry Kittles scored 19 points apiece for the Nets, who have lost six of their past seven games.

In Houston, Sherman Douglas scored eight of his 19 points in the first quarter as Milwaukee Bucks took the lead midway through the period and never trailed, handing Houston Rockets their fourth straight defeat, 81-76.

Vin Baker scored 17 points and Ray Allen added 16 points for the Bucks, the winners of five of their past seven outings. Hakeem Olajuwon scored 37 points for Houston.

At Minnesota, Stephon Marbury, the rookie, scored a season-high 33 points as Minnesota Timberwolves brought down Utah Jazz, 107-98. Terry Porter added 20 points for the Timberwolves, who have beaten the powerful Western Conference teams, Los Angeles and Utah, consecutively after losing three in a row. Minnesota became the first team in 13 games to reach 100 points against Utah.

In New York, Patrick Ewing scored 12 of his 17 points in the second half as New York Knicks used a 9-0 run to break a tie and go on to win their third straight game, 82-76 over the Atlanta Hawks.

Simon Barnes continues a review by *Times* writers of 1996's sporting highlights

Johnson's flash of sanity amid the madness

CROWNING GLORY

The fourth part of the Douglas Adams *Hitch-Hiker* trilogy, *So Long, And Thanks For All The Fish*, includes a character called Wonko the Sane. Wonko's house is inside out: the external walls bear pictures and bookshelves, the inside contains guttering, a garden path, a couple of small trees.

"Here," Wonko the Sane said, "we are outside the Asylum." He pointed again at the rough brickwork, the pointing, the guttering. "Go through that door," he pointed at the door through which they had originally entered, "and you go into the Asylum. I've tried to decorate it nicely to keep the inmates happy, but there's very little one can do. I never go in there now myself."

Locked up inside the vastness of the Earth, the world is *mad*; outside it all in his own little abode, the hermit is sane.

Atlanta was a madhouse, all right. The Olympic Games organising committee cleverly pretended that the complaints were simply a few "whining foreign journalists", but it was the competitors who really suffered from appalling transport, dreadful accommodation — even worse food.

The bomb, which killed one person, injured dozens and shocked millions, added a far deeper layer of insanity to the mad city. And death stalked the streets and handed *carte blanche* to the swaggering redneck security men, who were as inefficient as they were obstreperous and xenophobic. It was a city of bad vibes.

Johnson, wearing his golden shoes, breaks the tape in the 200 metres in Atlanta, setting a record time that stunned the world. Photograph: Mike Blake

And me? I had a lovely time, thanks very much. Because, every day for a week, I managed to get outside the Asylum. I found a place in Atlanta where you could escape from the woeful organisation, the morbid self-righteousness and the neurotic resentfulness that oppressed everyone who had anything to do with the Olympic Games.

Where was this enchanted spot, this sacred place? It was inside the stadiums, the gym halls, arenas and the courts. It was to be found at every point where the Atlanta organising committee handed over to the international sports federations. It came at the moment when the infrastructure could fade into the place where it should have been all along: the background. And we could at last turn our minds to something that had got completely lost inside the Asylum.

Sport. Competition. The best against the best against the best. Sheer, undiluted, absolutely wonderful bloody sport. Perhaps the madness in the streets even helped a little; focused our minds on the hard light of sporting sanity.

Sport may seem like a kind of madness in itself, but there are plenty of people inside the Asylum who thought that Wonko the Sane was mad. Compared with the world, or with the madness of the Atlanta streets, sport brings only the fresh air of sanity.

Now I could name any day of the post-bomb Games as my high-spot of the year: for my whole week was a series of Himalayan peaks, a family of giants, heads lost in the clouds of memory. It takes a cartographer of peculiar meticulousness to establish which of those peaks is Everest.

The week began with Donovan Bailey winning the 100 metres; as ever, the event of events. Then came Alexei Nemov making gymnastics history with his piked somersault somewhere up in the stratosphere above the high bar. Then Andrei Chemerkin, and his strutting beer-bellied victory in the super-heavyweight weightlifting.

Then — same determination, same defiance of gravity, slightly different shape — came the great Fu Mingxia, winning her second diving gold medal. And so back to the athletics stadium on Thursday night.

Perhaps you saw it on television. Television can certainly mix emotion and character and bring it to you rich and strong, but it cannot help but dilute the physical impact of what it sees. Television cannot tell you how cold and slippery is the skating rink, how the earth trembles at the passage of a Formula One motor car, how the geometry of football really works.

And it cannot make you *feel* how fast a man can run. It can only tell you the time, pedantically ticking away at the bottom of the screen, and then bring you the elations and despairs. It cannot bring that sense of shattered disbelief that comes when the limits of the human frame are redefined before our eyes.

I shall not forget seeing Michael Johnson run into the straight in the 200 metres. I believe at that moment that he was running faster than any man had ever run before. It was ... well, really rather shocking, actually.

> 'At that moment he was running faster than any man has ever run before'

"I knew coming off the curve — you can always tell coming off the curve to the straightaway — I knew that I was running faster than I had ever run in my life." Or any one else, for that matter: in his golden shoes, with his Groucho Marx knees-down strut.

The clock told us that this was a world record, a Beamonesque leap into the athletic impossible, but the information, 19.32 seconds and all that, was unnecessary, otiose, irrelevant. We knew; we had seen it. The number would become important, all in good time; but we were still looking at the scorchmarks in the air.

And all around me, hacks were on their feet, not to see the time, but because sitting down was emotionally impossible. And every cynical, deadline-oppressed, sulky, homesick weary one of us was grinning like a ninny and muttering awed obscenities. We all stood about, smirking and effing and blinding at each other in a collective trance of wonder: in a city of madness, a Damascus Road moment of blinding sanity.

Sport at the very, very highest level can do that; and scarcely anyone is immune. Sport has quite extraordinary power. And I had lived that Damascus Road moment every day of that extraordinary week. Every day, I had been privileged to make a brief journey outside the Asylum.

I finished my week of glories with the voluptuous beauties of dressage, and for the sixth time that week I knew perfection. The best against the best against the best: that is what the best — indeed, the only real part — of the Olympic Games is about. Sport is a mad world. But may I quote, without giving offence, the beautiful line from the Prayer Book? God, "whose service is perfect freedom".

Sport. Whose madness is perfect sanity.

TOMORROW

The day a six-stroke lead disappeared at the Masters

Test your knowledge with the Jumbo Sports Crossword

***THE TIMES* presents the traditional festive challenge of the Jumbo Sports Crossword to test your knowledge over the holiday period — with a Methuselah of Moët & Chandon champagne to the winner and six runners-up to receive copies of the sports book of the year.**

The sender of the first correct entry drawn will receive £250 worth of champagne while *Dark Trade — Lost In Boxing*, a journey through the shadowy world of the fight game, by Donald McRae, goes to the next six correct entries.

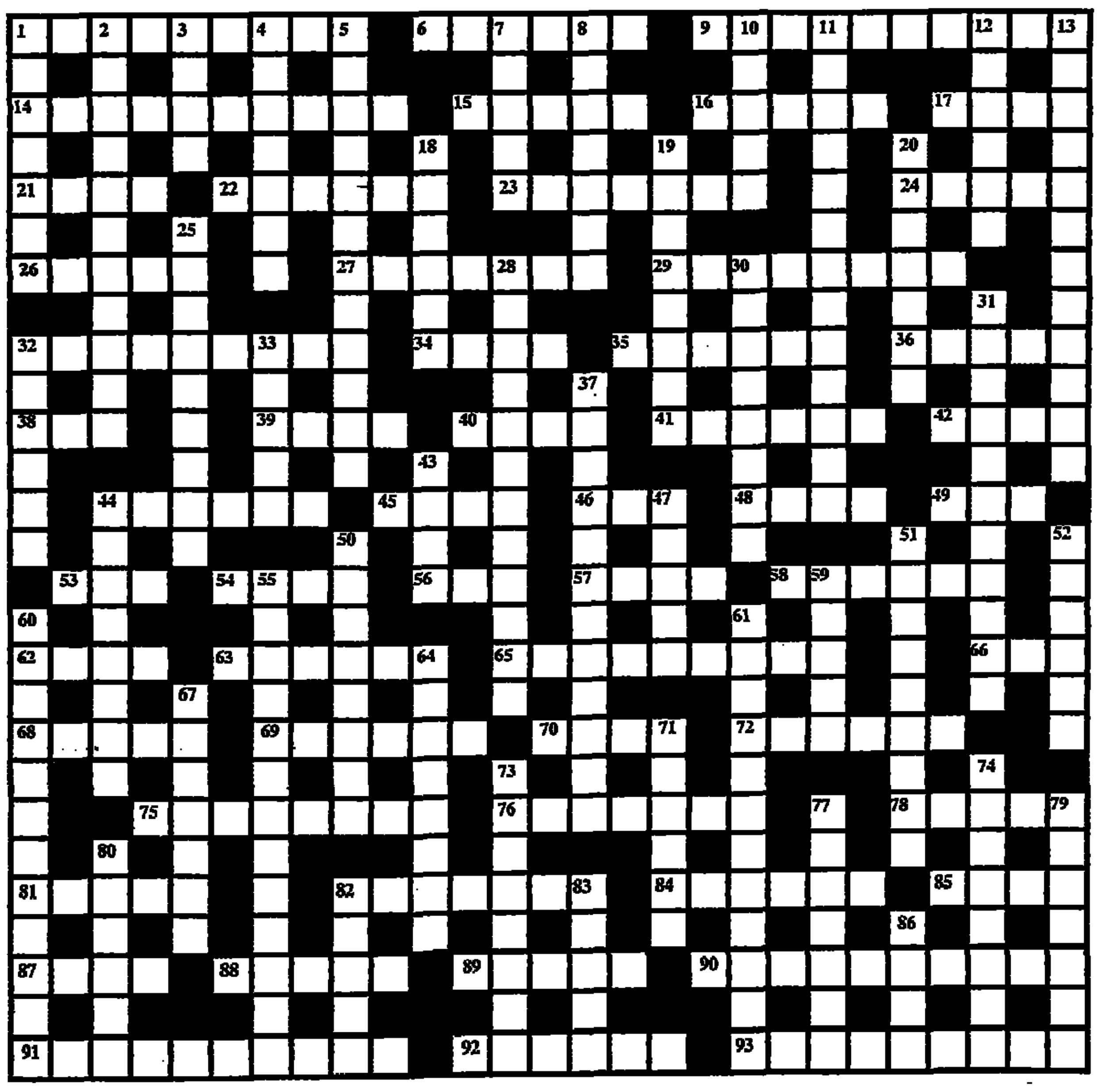
Compiled after five years of following renowned boxers in such diverse venues as Las Vegas and Belfast, *Dark Trade* won the William Hill sports book of the year award. It is published by Mainstream at £14.99.

Send your completed crossword with your name, address and daytime telephone number, to:

Jumbo Sports Crossword,
Sports Department, *The Times*,
1, Pennington Street,
London, E1 9XN

to arrive by Friday, January 10, 1997. The Sports Editor's decision is final. Usual rules apply. No correspondence.

Champagne
MOËT & CHANDON
Fondé en 1743



COMPILED BY NORMAN GILLER

NAME: ....

ADDRESS: ....

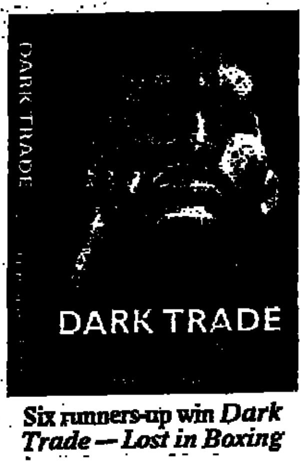
....

....

DAYTIME TELEPHONE: ....

ACROSS

1 Go in cages for an adopted Scot (9).
6 A French full back who made many a strong surge (6).
9 Snick for a close fielder (4, 2, 4).
14 Surprising FA Cup winners in 1973 (10).
15 Worth an effort from Zelezny (5).
16 Bowling remains? (5).
17 Marvin, who claimed the world heavyweight title (4).
21 In shape at Kennington (4).
22 He was said to be ten years ahead of the game (6).
23 Doug, who choked at St Andrews (7).
24 Transparently a pointless round (5).
26 Muhammad Ali and Herb Elliott have carried it (5).
27 First half, of course (7).
29 Footballing braves of Burslem (8).
32 Dip to avoid blow (4, 5).
34 Figuratively, a pitching iron (4).
35 Make redundant with a pass? (6).
36 On level terms (5).
38 Step on it in Indianapolis (3).
39 A running one in American Football (4).
40 Depressed over a varsity award? (4).
41 Looking closely at the opposition (6).
42 Loop the loop at Cowdray Park! (4).
44 Take it, hopefully, for the final stroke (6).
45 Is it set on a golf course? (4).
46 Bartram or Snead, for instance (3).
48 Mark and Gary, who were a twin threat with the Wallabies (4).
49 Weight at which Walter McGowan was world champion (3).
53 Tool of Hendry's trade (3).
54 Blemish in the penalty area! (4).
56 It means nothing in football (3).
57 Moans about the horses! (4).
58 Viva on for the Russian who sculled to three Olympic golds (6).
62 Idol changes in the swimming venue (4).
63 Tie of sorts for footballers and boxers! (4, 2).
65 Remove the opposition(9).
66 Hit-and-miss golf shot (3).
68 Ben, the golfer who followed the sun (5).
69 Strikers cannot stand missing a chance like this (6).
70 They are at home at Boothferry Park (4).
72 Bev followed Gus as a rugby league master (6).
75 Ball bounces back into play (8).
76 Lifts tennis shot and thumps uncouth chap! (4, 3).
78 Liz and Ted, who made the grade as showjumpers (5).
81 Team captained by Azharuddin (5).
82 The 1968 Olympic heavyweight champion still answering the bell (7).
84 Road where Hibernian parade (6).
85 Goalkeepers and boxers make one (4).
87 What Laker and Lock always did (4).
88 Hubert, who sounds at home when putting (5).
89 He refereed Henry Cooper's last fight (5).
90 Sportsmen must show it even though, at first, it sounds like death (10).
91 Coast to coast league? (10).
92 Rugby director at Newcastle (6).
93 Where you might get knocked down on court! (9).



Six runners-up win *Dark Trade — Lost in Boxing*

DOWN

1 Centre of attraction for Bath and England (7).
2 New activity for the sabbath (6, 5).
3 Major event that is often close (4).
4 Onlookers who regard golf as an art form perhaps (7).
5 Bowler who had a bond with Australia, not Anfield (5, 7).
7 Sporting embers (5).
8 What Len Shackleton did just for laughs (7).
10 Bet Joe, or possibly Steve, was the greatest (5).
11 Manchester United and Newcastle hope to be in one this season (8, 5).
12 Red ale for the one in front (6).
13 Man of 1,000 games and 125 caps (5, 7).
18 Gate opens for football in Bristol (6).
19 Produce a winning card on court? (5, 3)
20 Tackles through the grass! (7).
25 Strokes to the green by Beck? (4, 5).
28 He had an army of followers (6, 6).
30 One loser for the bowler's first ball (8).
31 Savo Milosevic, for example (11).
32 Hole where you may need a lead for direction (6).
33 Monty, old Aussie Test captain who made an art of cricket (5).
37 Brazilian world motor racing champion who peaked in the 1980s (6, 6).
43 He cottoned on to the value of rugby shirts (4).
44 It all adds up at the boxing weigh-in (8).
47 A grim change for an ex-world flyweight champion (5).
50 Skipper who survived a pocket of controversy (8).
51 Great All Blacks lock who was handy for Quins (4, 5).
52 Dave and Dudley, old South African not Norwegian cricket heroes (6).
55 Sets out to finish all square (5, 3, 1, 4).
59 Changes course (5).
60 Wimbledon's first black champion (6, 6).
61 Get familiar with Palace manager Dave (5, 7).
64 You can gauge it in the cauldron of the championship race (8).
67 Denis Compton, for instance, had a troublesome one (7).
71 Took 167 England wickets, many caught by Marsh (6).
73 Title holder, possibly Bob (8).
74 Schumacher, for example, will always switch it *on* (8).
77 I camera for a land of sporting giants (7).
79 Boxers and cricketers aim to get to the top of them (7).
80 Change tactics or the sight screen, perhaps (6).
82 If led, collect the ball (5).
83 John, who swam to four gold medals in Montreal (5).
86 Wes, a West Indian bowler of fame (4).

RACING: NORTHERN-TRAINED GREY IMPOSSIBLE TO OPPOSE IN SUBSTANDARD KEMPTON FIELD WITH CONDITIONS IN HIS FAVOUR

Strong Promise, who could prove the main danger to One Man in the Pertemps King George VI Chase at Kempton today, brushes through the birch in clearing one of Cheltenham's stiff fences. Photograph: Hugh Routledge

One Man on fast track to King George double

By Richard Evans
Racing Correspondent

ONE MAN, close to invincible over fences on flat courses, is impossible to oppose around Kempton Park this afternoon as he attempts to win his second successive Pertemps King George VI Chase.

The Gordon Richards-trained grey has suffered only two defeats in completed starts since being sent chasing three years ago and both have come at the Cheltenham Festival where the undulations of Prestbury Park brought about his downfall.

However, today's conditions are perfect for the highest-rated chaser in training as he takes on a field of largely substandard rivals, many of whom will not appreciate the fast going and tight turns at the Sunbury track.

Rough Quest, winner of the Racing Post Chase at the course last February, finished ahead of One Man in the Cheltenham Gold Cup, when chasing home Imperial Call, before winning the Grand National at Aintree. However, assuming Terry Casey remains satisfied with the ground after walking the course on Christmas Eve, he may struggle to keep tabs on the favourite on this faster surface over just three miles.

Casey: decided ground is suitable for Rough Quest

Barton Bank, beaten by One Man last time at Wetherby, is not the force of old; Couldnt Be Better is not good enough; Mr Mulligan and Nahthen Lad, the leading staying novices last year, have not enjoyed ideal preparations while Trying Again, a course specialist, needs softer ground.

If eight runners line up, Strong Promise would make some each-way appeal as Geoff Hubbard's progressive youngster should improve on his first attempt at three miles and goes well on the prevailing ground. However, realistically he has only place prospects behind **One Man.**

Given his cramped odds, punters will look elsewhere for value wagers and the last race at Kempton (3.15) offers the best bet on the card. **Peatswood**, twice a winner over course and distance, did not take to fences last term but showed all his old sparkle over the small obstacles at Cheltenham eight weeks ago behind Courbaril and the subsequent winners, Freddie Muck and Blaze Away. Mick Channon's runner has won off a handicap mark 11lb higher than today's and looks to have solid claims.

At Huntingdon, **Eastern River** (1.30) is still well handicapped and the Tim Forster-trained chaser, just pipped by Lord Of The West at Worcester last time, can supplement an earlier success at Warwick. **Flying Gunner** (2.00) is suited by a test of stamina and the David Nicholson-trained hurdler will appreciate the step up to 3¼ miles.

Cool Character (Hereford, 3.05) ran particularly well from out of the handicap at Taunton two weeks ago when chasing home Call Me River and can go one better in this weak handicap.

Call It A Day is the value call in the Rowland Meyrick Handicap Chase (Wetherby, 2.15) where The Grey Monk, runner-up in the Hennessy Gold Cup, is likely to start favourite. However, The Grey Monk has yet to win a truly-run race over an extended three miles and Nicholson's sound jumper is preferred at the likely odds.

Celestial Key was considered a possible Champion Hurdle contender last term and has a lenient mark for her handicap debut (1.45) judged on her good third to Mysilv at Haydock in February.

At Market Rasen, **Ubu Val** (2.05) makes considerable appeal despite top weight. He looks well handicapped on his best form last term and a fine seasonal reappearance behind Parsons Boy at Carlisle. He disappointed at Towcester last time but should be forgiven that lapse and can come into his own over this trip.

Venetia Williams is enjoying a terrific season with 18 winners from just 41 runners and **Rosencrantz** (1.35) can enhance her strike rate. The comfortable winner of novice hurdles at Wincanton and Taunton, he finished a good second to Hay Dance on his handicap debut last month and, with the winner of that race successful again at Hereford last Friday, the form looks solid.

The hurdling experience of **Denham Hill** (3.05) could give Charlie Mann's runner the edge over Burn Out, a useful bumper horse last season. The selection was runner-up to Mighty Moss at Worcester before finishing a good fourth to Forest Ivory.

Nap: CALL IT A DAY
(2.15 Wetherby)
Next best: Eastern River
(1.30 Huntingdon)

BIG RACE LINE-UP

2.15 PERTEMPS KING GEORGE VI CHASE C4
(Grade I: £63,325: 3m) (8 runners)

401 4420-25 BARTON BANK 40 (CD,F,G,S) (Mrs J Mould) D Nicholson 10-11-10 A Maguire 80
(Emerald green, white stars, emerald green cap, white star)
402 F3PP-20 COULDNT BE BETTER 26 (D,F,G,S) (R Whittle) C Brooks 9-11-10 G Bradley 65
(Royal blue, white hoops, royal blue sleeves, striped cap)
403 11112-4 MR MULLIGAN 18 (D,BF,F,G,S) (M Worcester) N Chance 8-11-10 A P McCoy 76
(Light blue, black sleeves, red seams, black and light blue quartered cap)
404 21121-5 NAHTHEN LAD 8 (G,S) (J Staw) Mrs J Pitman 7-11-10 N Williamson 73
(White, black stars, white sleeves, black cap)
405 F1116-1 ONE MAN 54 (D,F,G,S) (J Hales) G Richards 8-11-10 R Dunwoody [illegible]
(Yellow, red star, yellow sleeves, white armlets, yellow cap, red star)
406 2F121-1 ROUGH QUEST 9 (CD,G,S) (A Wates) T Casey 10-11-10 M A Fitzgerald 95
(Navy blue, green sash, cerise cap)
407 121121 STRONG PROMISE 33 (F,G) (G Hubbard) G Hubbard 5-11-10 K Gaule 85
(Emerald green, white sleeves, emerald green and white check cap)
408 1P11-12 TRYING AGAIN 19 (C,G,S) (W Dore) D Gandolfo 8-11-10 D Fortt 68
(Light blue, dark blue sash, hooped sleeves, quartered cap)

BETTING: 4-7 One Man, 4-1 Rough Quest, 6-1 Strong Promise, 9-1 Barton Bank, 20-1 Mr Mulligan, 25-1 Trying Again, 33-1 Nahthen Lad, 50-1 Couldnt Be Better

1996 (run at Sandown Park) ONE MAN 8-11-10 R Dunwoody (11-4 fav) G Richards 11 ran

COMPREHENSIVE FORM GUIDE TO THE EIGHT CONTENDERS

BARTON BANK

Nov 16, Cheltenham, good to firm, see **Strong Promise**.

Nov 2, Wetherby, good: see **One Man**.

Apr 27, Sandown, good to firm: (11-9) 17l 7th to Life Of A Lord (11-10) (3m 5f 110yd, grade III handicap chase, £57,806, 17 ran).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good: see **Rough Quest**.

Jan 6, Sandown, good to soft: see **One Man**.

COULDNT BE BETTER

Nov 30, Newbury, good: (11-10) 76l 8th to Coome Hill (10-0) (3m 2f 110yd, grade III handicap chase, £48,283, 11 ran)

Nov 20, Haydock, good: (11-12) 4l 2nd to Unguided Missile (11-0) (3m, handicap chase, £10,036, 4 ran).

Apr 20, Ayr, soft: (10-2) pulled up before 4 out behind Moorcroft Boy (10-2) (4m 1f, grade III handicap chase, £38,590, 20 ran).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good: see **Rough Quest**.

MR MULLIGAN

Dec 7, Chepstow, good to soft: see **Trying Again**.

Mar 17, Cheltenham, good to soft: see **Nahthen Lad**.

Feb 14, Ascot, good to soft: (11-12) beat Nahthen Lad (11-5) 15l (3m 110yd, grade II novice chase, £15,850, 10 ran)

NAHTHEN LAD

Dec 18, Bangor, good: (11-10) 26l 6th to Freddie Muck (11-0) (3m, handicap hurdle, £4,765, 7 ran)

Mar 13, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-4) beat Mr Mulligan (11-4) 8l (3m 1f, grade I novice chase, £54,673, 12 ran)

Feb 14, Ascot, good to soft: see **Mr Mulligan**.

ONE MAN

Nov 2, Wetherby, good: (11-10) beat Barton Bank (11-10) 7l (3m 1f, grade II chase, £18,300, 4 ran).

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good: see **Rough Quest**.

Jan 6, Sandown, good to soft: (11-10) beat Monsieur Le Cure (11-10) 14l with Barton Bank (11-10) pulled before 2 out (3m 110yd, grade I chase, £63,835, 11 ran)

ROUGH QUEST

Dec 17, Folkestone, good to soft: (10-12) beat Destin d'Estruval (10-12) ½l (2m 4f 110yd, novice hurdle, £2,805, 14 ran)

Mar 30, Aintree, good: (10-7) beat Encore Un Peu (10-0) 1¼l (4m 4f, grade III handicap chase, £142,534, 27 ran)

Mar 14, Cheltenham, good: (12-0) 4l 2nd to Imperial Call (12-0) with **Couldnt Be Better** (12-0) 19l 3rd, **Barton Bank** (12-0) 3l 4th and **One Man** (12-0) neck and 8l 6th (3m 2f 110yd, grade I chase, £131,156, 10 ran)

STRONG PROMISE

Nov 23, Ascot, good to firm: (10-8) beat Major Bell (11-1) 4l (2m 3f 110yd, grade II limited handicap chase, £25,984, 8 ran)

Nov 16, Cheltenham, good to firm: (10-0) head 2nd to Challenger Du Luc (10-2) with **Barton Bank** (11-5) 13¼l 5th (2m 4f 110yd, grade III handicap chase, £38,270, 12 ran).

Nov 2, Ascot, good to firm: (11-8) beat Minor Key (11-1) 27l (2m 3f 110yd, novice chase, £4,986, 2 ran).

Oct 29, Cheltenham, good to firm: (12-0) beat Pongo Waring (11-13) 11l (2m 4f 110yd, novice handicap chase, £4,562, 3 ran).

TRYING AGAIN

Dec 7, Chepstow, good to soft: (11-1) 1¼l 2nd to Belmont King (10-6) with **Mr Mulligan** (11-12) 12¼l 4th (3m, grade II limited handicap chase, £18,822, 7 ran).

Nov 20, Kempton, good to soft: (11-3) beat Old Bridge (10-9) 7l (2m 4f 110yd, handicap chase, £4,715, 7 ran)

Apr 17, Cheltenham, good to soft: (11-11) beat Air Shot (11-4) 4l (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,602, 7 ran)

Mar 21, Wincanton, good to soft: (12-3) beat Capenwray (11-3) a distance (2m 5f, novice chase, £3,735, 3 ran)

Selection: ONE MAN (nap)

Meetings fall as frost bites into fixture list

THE meetings scheduled for Ayr, Newton Abbot and Wincanton today were abandoned yesterday. At Ayr, officials walked the course during the morning and found it frozen. With the forecast of another sharp frost in Scotland last night, they had no alternative but to call off the meeting.

Newton Abbot also fell to a morning inspection. Pat Masterson, the general manager at the course, said: "The course was frozen at noon and in view of further frost being forecast, we had to abandon."

At Wincanton, officials delayed until mid-afternoon before calling the meeting off. The course was frozen.

Four tracks, Hereford, Huntingdon, Sedgefield and Market Rasen, depend on inspections today. Hereford inspect at 7.30am, with the clerk of the course, John Williams, looking for an improvement in conditions. "We couldn't have raced today but it is sunny so it depends on the weather tonight," he said.

Market Rasen have an inspection at 8.30am. Charlie Moore, the course clerk, said yesterday: "The course was raceable this morning. The temperature is 4C with some cloud, but -1C to -3C of frost is forecast for tonight so we will hold a precautionary inspection." Sedgefield and Huntingdon inspect at 7.30am.

Aardwolf's turn of foot should prove decisive

KEMPTON PARK
CHANNEL 4

TODAY'S RACES ON TELEVISION

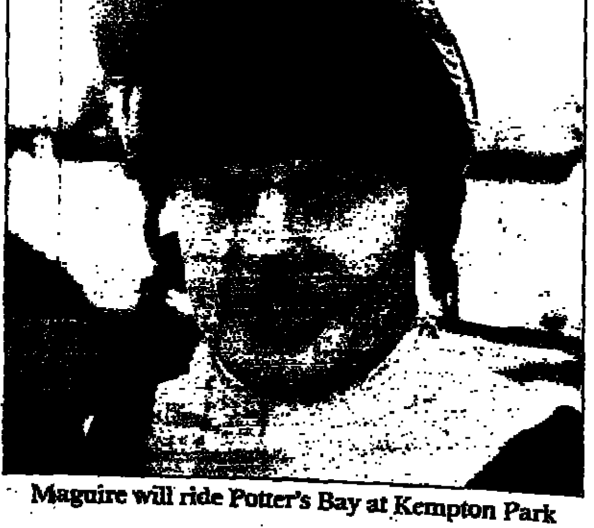
1.10: See More Business beat Buckhouse Boy at Chepstow before finishing an excellent second to Dorans Pride in a grade one race at Fairyhouse, which makes Paul Nicholls's runner the form choice. He should appreciate the step up to three miles and has an obvious chance. Fine Thyne travels well in his races and after two chasing successes here should appreciate the likely strong pace. However, in a tough race, **Aardwolf** just gets the vote. The five-year-old had sufficient speed to win over two miles at Sandown before just getting the better of the well-regarded Major Summit in a fast-run race over three miles.

1.40: Despite **Chai-Yo** being raised 20lb since the start of the season, the handicapper has not got to grips with him and conditions here should be ideal for Jim Old's progressive hurdler. The six-year-old has plenty of speed, appreciates a tight track and should be able to pounce late on. Albemine will appreciate today's faster surface after a good effort behind Most Equal at Huntingdon. Yet Again is on the upgrade but probably too far out of the handicap.

2.15: see above.

2.45: The finishing speed of **Potter's Bay** could prove decisive here. The seven-year-old showed a priceless ability to quicken away from rivals in the closing stages when winning at Cheltenham and Sandown and David Nicholson's runner should be able to maintain his unbeaten record at the main expense of Mister Drum. Despite winning two out of his three starts, Mark Wilkinson's chaser has shown a tendency to run down some of his fences, while Greenback jumps to the left. Sublime Fellow is far from genuine and may not relish a battle.

Richard Evans


Maguire will ride Potter's Bay at Kempton Park

KEMPTON PARK

THUNDERER

12.40 Sanmartino
1.10 See More Business
1.40 Chai-Yo
2.15 One Man
2.45 Mister Drum
3.15 **PEATSWOOD** (nap)

The Times Private Handicapper's top rating: 2.15 **ONE MAN.**

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 1.40 **ALBEMINE** (nap).

GOING: GOOD TOTE JACKPOT MEETING SIS

12.40 GOOD JOB NOVICES HURDLE
(£7,263: 2m) (13 runners)

101 111111 KAILASH 40 (D,F,G) (M Fletcher) M Pipe 5-11-10 A P McCoy 96
102 0-21 DANEGOLD 21 (D,G) (Circular Distribution) M Channon 4-11-5 R Hughes 81
103 2 DESERT GREEN 21 (BF) (Mrs P Jubert) R Hannon 7-11-5 N Williamson 88
104 0/245/0- [illegible] FLUTTER 525 (S) (R Wright) [illegible] 8-11-5 P Holley —
105 LEADING SPIRIT 110F (Anthea Partners Two) C Wall 4-11-5 G Bradley —
106 0 MARSUR 21 (E McGrath) N Henderson 4-11-5 M A Fitzgerald —
107 P0 NIGHT FLARE 21 (Mrs F Gordon) S Woodman 4-11-5 K Gaule —
108 3/33 NORDANCE PRINCE 26 (Pinks Gym) Mrs [illegible] 5-11-5 L Reynolds 91
109 4 04P-0P PALLADIUM BOY 20 (Palladium Ltd) Mrs J Retter 6-11-5 C Maude 50
110 1 PROTON 21 (D,G) (Persian War Racing) P [illegible] 6-11-5 R Dunwoody [illegible]
111 SANMARTINO 82F ([illegible]) D Nicholson 4-11-5 A Maguire —
112 2-12 SECRET SPRING 28 (D,BF,G) (M George) P Hedger 4-11-5 M Richards 84
113 004-52 MOOR HALL LADY 24 (R Brookhouse) N Babbage 5-11-0 C Maude 76

BETTING: 9-4 Kailash, 5-2 Sanmartino, 6-1 Proton, 10-1 Desert Green, 12-1 Danegold, 14-1 others.

1995: MEETING ABANDONED — FROST

FORM FOCUS

KAILASH beat Herbert Lodge 7l in 5-runner grade II Mackeson Novices Hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 110yd, good to firm).
SECRET SPRING 1¾l 2nd of 12 to Yet Again in novice hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good to firm). Previously beat DANEGOLD 3½l in 12-runner novice hurdle at Windsor (2m, good).
DANEGOLD beat Sauep 7l in 15-runner novice hurdle at Windsor (2m, good). PROTON beat DESERT GREEN 9l in 14-runner novice hurdle at Windsor (2m, good). NORDANCE PRINCE 3l and short-head 3rd of 19 to [illegible] in novice hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good).
SANMARTINO smart stayer on Flat, 2nd to Celeric at Newmarket last time.
Selection: SECRET SPRING

1.10 PERTEMPS RECRUITMENT PARTNERSHIP FELTHAM NOVICES CHASE C4
(Grade I: £22,950: 3m) (7 runners)

201 6PPP-11 AARDWOLF 19 (D,G,S) ([illegible]) C Brooks 5-11-7 G Bradley 87
202 453-31F BUCKHOUSE BOY 12 (G,S) ([illegible]) N Twiston-Davies 6-11-7 C Maude 92
203 1-11300 DJEDDAH 25 (S) ([illegible]) F Doumen (Fr) 5-11-7 A Kondrat —
204 /0/1211 FINE THYNE 36 (CD,F,G,S) (P Wiegand) Mrs A Perrett 7-11-7 M A Fitzgerald 84
205 210F12-1 HATCHAM BOY 27 (D,G,S) ([illegible]) [illegible] 6-11-7 A Maguire 73
206 111-12 SEE MORE BUSINESS 25 (G,S) (P Barber) P Nicholls 6-11-7 A P McCoy [illegible]
207 213-112 SOLOMON'S DANCER 25 (F,G) ([illegible]) G Richards 6-11-7 R Dunwoody 79

BETTING: 6-4 See More Business, 7-2 Aardwolf, 6-1 Fine Thyne, 7-1 Buckhouse Boy, 8-1 Hatcham Boy, Djeddah, 12-1 Solomon's Dancer

FORM FOCUS

AARDWOLF completed double, beat Major Summit short-head in 4-runner conditions race at Sandown (3m 110yd, good). BUCKHOUSE BOY beat Foodbroker Star 25l in 10-runner conditions chase at Newbury (2m 4f, good) on penultimate start. DJEDDAH best recent effort 6½l 3rd of 15 to [illegible] in handicap chase at Auteuil (2m 7f 110yd, very soft). FINE THYNE completed double, dead-heated with Berude Not To in 4-runner novice chase over course and distance (good to soft). HATCHAM BOY beat Welcome Call [illegible] in 8-runner novice chase at Newbury (3m, good). SEE MORE BUSINESS [illegible] 2nd [illegible] to Dorans Pride in grade I [illegible] Chase at Fairyhouse (2m 4f, [illegible]). SOLOMON'S DANCER [illegible] 2nd of 10 to [illegible] in novice chase at Newcastle (2m 4f, good).
Selection: SEE MORE BUSINESS

1.40 NETWORK PERSONNEL HANDICAP HURDLE C4
(£6,827: 2m) (6 runners)

301 1005-30 THINKING TWICE 27 (D,F,G,S) ([illegible]) N Henderson 7-11-10 M A Fitzgerald 96
302 21-1121 CHAI-YO 13 (D,G,S) ([illegible]) J Old 6-11-2 G Upton 94
303 523P-52 ALBEMINE 16 (D,F,G) ([illegible]) Mrs J Cecil [illegible] T Kent [illegible]
304 2F21P-3 INTERMAGIC 27 (D,G,S) ([illegible]) [illegible] S Fox 90
305 211 YET AGAIN 14 (F,G) (A Geffen) Miss G Kelleway [illegible] — 82
306 P1360 PYRRHIC DANCE 21 (F,G) ([illegible]) [illegible] D Skyrme —

Long handicap: Intermagic 9-13, Yet Again 9-10, Pyrrhic Dance 7-5

BETTING: 11-10 Chai-Yo, 7-2 Albemine, 4-1 Yet Again, 7-1 Intermagic, 8-1 Thinking Twice, 33-1 Pyrrhic Dance

FORM FOCUS

THINKING TWICE 27l 3rd of 6 to Second Call in novice chase at Towcester (2m 110yd, good) on penultimate start.
CHAI-YO beat Kippanour 12l in 4-runner handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (2m 1f, good). Previously 2l 2nd of 10 to Mister Morose in handicap hurdle at Newbury (2m 110yd, good) with INTERMAGIC (7lb better off) 1¾l 3rd and THINKING TWICE (4lb better off) [illegible] 9th. ALBEMINE [illegible] 2nd of 9 to Most Equal in handicap hurdle at Huntingdon (2m 110yd, good to soft). YET AGAIN completed double, beat [illegible] in [illegible]-runner novice hurdle at Taunton (2m 1f, good). PYRRHIC DANCE [illegible] of 12 to [illegible] in handicap hurdle at Windsor (2m, good).
Selection: CHAI-YO

2.15 PERTEMPS KING GEORGE VI CHASE C4
(Grade I: £63,325: 3m) (8 runners)

RUNNERS AND RIDERS — SEE ABOVE

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wnrs	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
M Channon	3	7	42.9	E Murphy	5	22	[illegible]
D Gandolfo	6	15	40.0	A Maguire	17	79	21.5
J Upson	3	8	37.5	N Williamson	12	59	20.3
F Doumen	3	9	33.3	R Dunwoody	[illegible]	104	19.2
P Nicholls	5	16	31.3	M A Fitzgerald	[illegible]	90	18.9
Lady Herries	4	13	30.8	A P McCoy	[illegible]	44	13.2

GUIDE TO OUR IN-LINE RACECARD

101 (12) 113143 GOOD TIMES 13 (BF,F,G,S) (Mrs D Robinson) B Hall 12-0 B West (7) 88

Racecard number. Six-figure form (F — fell. P — pulled up. U — unseated rider. B — brought down. S — slipped up. R — refused. D — disqualified). Horse's name. Days since last outing: F if flat. (B — blinkers. V — visor. H — hood. E — Eyeshield. C — course winner. D — distance winner. CD — course and distance winner. BF — beaten favourite in latest race). Going on which horse has won (F — firm, good to firm, hard. G — good. S — soft, good to soft, heavy). Owner in brackets. Trainer. Age and weight. Rider plus any allowance. The Times Private Handicapper's rating.

2.45 NETWORK DESIGN INTERNATIONAL WAYWARD LAD NOVICES CHASE C4
(£10,329: 2m 4f 110yd) (4 runners)

501 1/23F11 GREENBACK 17 (F,G,S) (J Joseph) P Hobbs 5-11-7 N Williamson 87
502 11-1211 MISTER DRUM 20 (D,F,G,S) ([illegible]) M Wilkinson 7-11-7 R Dunwoody 97
503 121-111 POTTER'S BAY 14 (D,F,G) (Mrs J Potter) D Nicholson 7-11-7 A Maguire 96
504 2F0-151 SUBLIME FELLOW 22 (F,G) ([illegible]) N Henderson 6-11-7 M A Fitzgerald [illegible]

BETTING: 5-4 Potter's Bay, 9-4 Mister Drum, 4-1 Greenback, 7-1 Sublime Fellow

FORM FOCUS

GREENBACK completed double, beat Sunset And Vine 11l in 5-runner novice chase at Folkestone (2m, good to soft). MISTER DRUM completed double, beat Bold Boss 9l in 9-runner novice chase at Market Rasen (2m 1f 110yd, good). POTTER'S BAY completed treble, beat Topple Watching 1l in 2-runner novice chase at Sandown (2m 4f 110yd, good). SUBLIME FELLOW beat Forcal Invitation 8l in 9-runner novice chase at Southwell (2m, good).
Selection: POTTER'S BAY

3.15 PERTEMPS CRACK CLUB HANDICAP HURDLE
(£6,912: 3m 110yd) (9 runners)

601 212323 MYTTON'S CHOICE 28 (BF,F,G) (D Mytton) D Nicholson 5-11-10 A Maguire [illegible]
602 33-2124 LANSDOWNE 29 (D,G,S) ([illegible]) P Nicholls 8-11-7 A P McCoy 98
603 116/04 CASTLE COURAGEOUS 12 (C,G,S) ([illegible]) Lady Herries 9-11-7 E Murphy 94
604 1FFR-4 PEATSWOOD 57 (CD,F,G,S) (P Taylor) M Channon 8-11-7 R Hughes 92
605 1416-35 ULURU 15 (C,F,S) ([illegible]) C Morlock 8-10-11 R Dunwoody 94
606 30-5312 TIM 19 (C,F,S) ([illegible]) J Jenkins 6-10-6 M A Fitzgerald 93
607 06P-515 COKENNY BOY 19 (F,G,S) ([illegible]) Mrs J Pitman 11-10-4 N Williamson 90
608 056-613 NICK THE BEAK 19 (C,S) ([illegible]) J Gifford 7-10-4 C Maude 91
609 25045- EALING COURT 404 (G) (R Brookhouse) N Babbage 7-10-0 G Upton —

Long handicap: Ealing Court 9-1.

BETTING: 11-4 Mytton's Choice, 4-1 Lansdowne, 5-1 Tim, 6-1 Nick The Beak, 7-1 Castle Courageous, 8-1 Uluru, Cokenny Boy, 12-1 others.

FORM FOCUS

MYTTON'S CHOICE 2¼l 3rd of 9 to [illegible] in handicap hurdle at Warwick (2m 5f, good) with CASTLE COURAGEOUS (14lb better off) 15¾l 7th. LANSDOWNE 12¾l 4th of 15 to [illegible] in handicap hurdle at Chepstow (3m, soft). PEATSWOOD 8¾l 4th of 5 to [illegible] in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (3m 5f, good). ULURU 12¾l 5th of 10 to Elburg in handicap hurdle at Cheltenham (3m 110yd, good). COKENNY BOY beat TIM (3lb better off) 2½l in 5-runner handicap hurdle at Sandown (2m 6f, good) on penultimate start.
NICK THE BEAK beat Glen Mirage 3½l in 10-runner handicap hurdle at Folkestone (2m 6f 110yd, good to soft) on penultimate start.
Selection: MYTTON'S CHOICE

Blinkered first time

HEREFORD: 1.05 Country Lover, 2.05 Hugh Daniels, Purbeck Cavalier, 3.35 Nordic Breeze. **HUNTINGDON:** 12.30 Kamikaze, Wicley Wonder. **LINGFIELD PARK:** 1.20 Oakon Wood, 2.20 Fancy Design, 2.20 Code Red. **MARKET RASEN:** 2.35 Lord Vick. **SEDGEFIELD:** 12.10 Pacrare Gaucho. **WOLVERHAMPTON:** 3.00 Fenian Court, Young Benson

RAPIDE RACELINE
0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS 0930 168+ COMMENTARY RESULTS
KEMPTON 101 201 HEREFORD 106 206
WETHERBY 102 202 AYR 107 207
WINCANTON 103 203 SEDGEFIELD 108 208
W'HAMPTON 104 204 HUNT'DON 209 209
MKT RASEN 105 205 N. ABBOT 210 210
LINGFIELD 211 211
FULL RESULTS FOR ABOVE 168 FULL RESULTS FOR ABOVE 568
45p/min cheap 50p/min other times. [illegible]

'To win it a fourth time would be something'

Reaching for a landmark on another grey day

RICHARD DUNWOODY

On the task he faces in the King George VI Chase

If there wasn't enough at stake in the Pertemps King George VI Chase at Kempton today, there is an additional personal incentive. I hardly need one but I'm told no jockey has won the race more than three times. To win it a fourth time would be something to treasure.

I have to feel positive about reaching that landmark because One Man deserves to be favourite. He is quite a straightforward ride, although he can be a bit keen, as he was in the King George last year. He hit the front a fair way from the finish but he was jumping so well that I didn't want to disappoint him.

That was the first time I'd ridden him. Even though I'd seen a lot of him and knew he was good, I was surprised when he won by 14 lengths. The horse was slightly short of work — the race was transferred to Sandown two weeks after Kempton was abandoned. Let's hope that does not happen today.

Great horses come in different shapes and sizes. You can get a totally different feel from one than from the next. As soon as you sit on One Man you can feel he uses himself well. You can sense his strength, but it is not the striking power of Desert Orchid. Every time I sat on Desert Orchid I couldn't believe the power in his neck.

Unless you'd totally ignored the media for the last 12 months, you'd be aware how important One Man has become to racing. There's an air of expectancy. Like Desert Orchid, he is a grey and the public loves greys. I suppose they stand out in a race, although One Man and Desert Orchid would stand out in any crowd, irrespective of their colour.

The two horses are very similar. Perhaps One Man is not quite as extravagant at his fences. Desert Orchid was naturally flamboyant. I'll never forget the two King Georges I won on him — particularly the second in 1990, which marked his fourth win. But One Man is hardly pedestrian. The way he jumped his fences down the back at Sandown last year was brilliant. Even if he has some way to go before matching Desert Orchid, he can certainly put on an exhibition.

All jockeys savour the atmosphere at Kempton on Boxing Day. It is a festive crowd and they want something to cheer. However, none of this will matter when the race starts. It won't even enter my mind that I'll be riding an odds-on favourite. People talk about pressure but that is only something you inflict upon yourself. If anything, it is easier to ride in a race like the King George. I know all of my opponents. Some I have ridden before, so I have a fair idea of how the race will unfold.

Even so, I'll be playing things by ear. Sometimes the pace varies through a race as other jockeys try to set it up for themselves. It can make things difficult but One Man is very versatile, which is a big help. It's a lot more straightforward than riding one in a 20-runner novice hurdle at a small track, when you never really know what you're up against.

Tactically, I prefer to concentrate on getting it right for myself rather than worrying about the opposition. It doesn't matter what's happening around you if you mess up your own chance. Nevertheless, Rough Quest must be a big threat. He won nicely over hurdles at Folkestone recently but I feel One Man would have started at odds-on in the same race.

I rode a horse for his trainer, Terry Casey, last week and Terry wasted no time in assuring me his horse was very well. Of course, it's far from a two-horse race — they never are at this level. But I know what my horse is capable of. I think the other jockeys will be more concerned with what my horse is doing.

I have been in regular contact with Gordon Richards, who trains the horse and has come to know him so well. And I must say it's encouraging to listen to him — he couldn't be more pleased. When I rode One Man to win at Wetherby seven weeks ago, he was forward enough to beat Barton Bank, whom he meets again today. I know Mr Richards feels he is sharper now.

I haven't ridden the horse since, but that's not necessary. Training chasers is not like Formula One, where the drivers test their cars at full speed. Horses seldom go anywhere near racing pace in their homework, although One Man will have done some strong work because his intended prep race for the King George was called off. He won't be lacking in fitness today.

For my part, I'll be fresh, having enjoyed a traditional lunch with my family yesterday. That's a luxury many jockeys can't afford at Christmas. Mind you, we could all have done without the traditional Christmas weather. All jockeys live for meetings like the one at Kempton today. We're prepared and very excited.

HUGH ROUTLEDGE

Dunwoody and One Man sail over the last on the way to a spectacular victory in last year's King George

LINGFIELD PARK

THUNDERER

12.50 Cedez Le Passage
1.20 The Wyandotte Inn
1.50 Effervescence
2.20 Passage Creeping
2.50 Waikiki Beach
3.20 Coh Sho No

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 3.20 Nothing Doing.

GOING: STANDARD DRAW: 5F-1M, LOW NUMBERS BEST SIS

12.50 EPIPHANY CLAIMING STAKES (Div I: £2,541: 1m 2f) (6 runners)

1 (1) 050516 CEDEZ LE PASSAGE 12 (B,G) (A Richards) K Cunningham-Brown 5-9-9 W Ryan 93
2 (2) 400-232 BAROSSA VALLEY 13 (G) (C W Wilson) P Butler 5-9-5 D Sweeney (5) ⊞
3 (6) 630003 SLIP JIG 15 (S) (J Horgan) R Hannon 3-9-0 Dane O'Neill 93
4 (4) 506060 HATTA SUNSHINE 30 (CD,G) (R Kiernan) A Moore 6-8-9 Candy Morris 85
5 (5) 40-0000 NORTHERN CHIEF 34 (F,S) (M Vowles) J Cullinan 6-8-9 V Slattery —
6 (3) 125035 HOW COULD-I 6J (F) (G Wiltshire) Mrs N Macauley 3-7-13 J Quinn 86

BETTING: 5-4 Barossa Valley, 3-1 Cedez Le Passage, 9-2 Slip Jig, 5-1 How Could-I, 8-1 Hatta Sunshine, 16-1 Northern Chief

1995: NO CORRESPONDING MEETING

1.20 MARY & JOSEPH NURSERY HANDICAP (2-Y-O: £2,846: 6f) (7 runners)

1 (7) 264540 ROYAL ORCHID 65 (M Al-Shuaibi) R Hannon 9-7 Dane O'Neill 94
2 (1) 143501 HEAVENLY MISS 6 (C,D,F,G) (T Mitchell) J Bridger 9-5 (7ex) S Sanders ⊞
3 (6) 302232 THE WYANDOTTE INN 13 (G Farndon) R Hollinshead 9-3 W Ryan 89
4 (3) 00060 COUNTLESS TIMES 19 (Pri Way Partnership) W Muir 8-6 A Clark 85
5 (4) 000 OAKEN WOOD 42 (B) (Gallagher Materials) N Callaghan 8-1 Angela Gallimore (7) 80
6 (2) 0000 ISLAND PRINCE 51 (J R Leisure) N Callaghan 7-10 J Quinn 98
7 (5) 000000 MYSTERY 37 (Mrs G R Smith) S Dow 7-10 D Salt (7) 91

BETTING: 7-4 The Wyandotte Inn, 5-2 Heavenly Miss, 9-2 Royal Orchid, 8-1 Countless Times, 10-1 Mystery, 12-1 Oaken Wood, 14-1 Island Prince.

1.50 THREE WISE MEN MEDIAN AUCTION MAIDEN STAKES (2-Y-O: £2,846: 7f) (4 runners)

1 (4) 020242 EFFERVESCENCE 7 (Gold Bosters Syndicate) R Hannon 9-0 Dane O'Neill ⊞
2 (1) 40003 HEVER GOLF MOVER 6 (Hever Racing Club I) T Naughton 8-9 D Holland 73
3 (2) 5660 LILY JAQUES 7 (A Coogan) R Guest 8-9 S Sanders 89
4 (3) 006 SOURA 6 (L A Hurley) P Kelleway 8-9 M Wigham 78

BETTING: 4-7 Effervescence, 9-2 Hever Golf Mover, 6-1 Soura, 8-1 Lily Jaques.

2.20 SANTA CLAUS MAIDEN STAKES (£3,469: 1m) (9 runners)

1 (8) 000-003 ROYAL CARLTON 13 (Mrs M Doyle) G L Moore 4-9-0 S Whitworth 85
2 (1) 5-25000 BE SATISFIED 21 (F Hill) A Moore 3-8-13 A Clark 74
3 (9) 000 GEORGIE BOY 254 (Mrs Swinburn) Miss G Kelleway 3-8-13 Angela Gallimore (7) —
4 (6) 650000 HEVER GOLF EAGLE 52 (Hever Racing Club III) T Naughton 3-8-13 D Holland 69
5 (3) 00-0000 LITTLE PILGRIM 13 (R Page) T Jones 3-8-13 R Perham —
6 (2) 4044/03 RIVER SEINE 21 (Mrs G Withers) S Knight 4-8-9 W Ryan 81
7 (5) 0 BROUGHTONS RELISH 15 (Broughton B'stock) W Musson 3-8-8 D Williams (7) —
8 (7) 0-85066 FANCY DESIGN 37 (V) (Mrs V M Harris) P Mitchell 3-8-8 J Quinn 74
9 (4) 262402 PASSAGE CREEPING 37 (P Jacobs) S Dow 3-8-8 S Sanders ⊞

BETTING: 6-4 Passage Creeping, 2-1 Royal Carlton, 5-1 River Seine, 8-1 Hever Golf Eagle, 12-1 Be Satisfied, 16-1 Fancy Design, 20-1 others

2.50 EPIPHANY CLAIMING STAKES (Div II: £2,529: 1m 2f) (10 runners)

1 (2) 341402 WAIKIKI BEACH 15 (C,BF,F,G) (Pennine Partners) G L Moore 5-9-9 S Whitworth 86
2 (6) 542240 LOVEYOUMILLIONS 12 (F,S) (Elite Racing Club) N Tinkler 4-9-1 W Ryan ⊞
3 (8) 2000-01 BON SECRET 15 (C,G) (E Jackman) T Naughton 4-8-13 D Holland 93
4 (5) 004260 EASTLEIGH 13 (C,B,S) (J Bigg) R Hollinshead 7-8-9 Lisa Watson (7) 77
5 (4) 05-500 DRAGON GREEN 12 (G) (Old Style Partnership) J Cullinan 5-8-7 R Perham —
6 (10) 0030 TOPUP 98 (J Davies) J Hills 3-8-6 M Adams 88
7 (3) 600000 JUSTINIANUS 7 (G,S) (J Bridger) J Bridger 4-8-5 S Sanders 54
8 (9) 000404 MEDIATE 15 (C,F,G) (A Hide) A Hide 4-8-5 G Milligan (7) 76
9 (7) 640500 UONI 114 (M Halstead) P Butler 3-8-1 J Quinn 79
10 (1) 005305 EFFICACIOUS 6 (C Sparrowhawk) A Moore 3-7-11 F Norton 80

BETTING: 7-4 Bon Secret, 9-4 Waikiki Beach, 7-2 Loveyoumillions, 8-1 Eastleigh, 10-1 Efficacious, 12-1 Mediate, 14-1 Uoni, 16-1 Topup, 20-1 others.

3.20 REINDEER HANDICAP (£2,541: 2m) (10 runners)

1 (4) 640165 GUEST ALLIANCE 15 (CD,G) (Ballard 1834 Ltd) A Moore 4-10-0 Candy Morris 90
2 (10) 230631 WOTTASHAMBLES 15 (CD,F,S) (Dream On Racing) L M Hall 5-9-2 D Holland 94
3 (5) 55/6010- CAVINA 24J (CD,G) (P Jacobs) N Graham 6-9-1 Dane O'Neill —
4 (6) 550343 CODE RED 10J (V) (Bowman Partnership) W Muir 3-9-0 A Clark 97
5 (8) 500034 COH SHO NO 44 (H Ness) S Dow 3-8-13 S Sanders 90
6 (2) 000000 ADILOV 6 (T Mitchell) J Bridger 4-8-9 D Sweeney (5) 80
7 (9) 000002 MAPENGO 12 (G) (Alan Spargo Ltd) J Cullinan 5-8-9 V Slattery ⊞
8 (3) 351023 NOTHING DOING 13 (G,S) (Broughton Bloodstock) W Musson 7-8-4 F Norton 93
9 (1) 6/0-000 ETOILE DU NORD 13 (Miss Z Whitmore) H Collingridge 4-7-11 J Quinn —
10 (7) 402060 ZELIBA 12 (F) (G Wiltshire) Mrs N Macauley 4-7-10 Angela Gallimore (7) 90

Long handicap: Zeliba 7-3.

BETTING: 9-4 Wottashambles, 4-1 Coh Sho No, 5-1 Guest Alliance, 6-1 Code Red, Nothing Doing, 8-1 Mapengo, 12-1 Cavina, 16-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS	Wins	Rnrs	%	JOCKEYS	Winners	Rides	%
L Montague Hall	10	48	20.8	W Ryan	34	192	17.7
R Guest	11	62	17.7	D Holland	29	164	17.7
A Hide	4	23	17.4	S Whitworth	34	253	13.4
J Hills	20	119	16.8	M Wigham	12	106	11.3
N Graham	9	61	14.8	A Clark	45	405	11.1
N Callaghan	17	117	14.5	S Sanders	39	374	10.4
R Hollinshead	25	188	13.3	Candy Morris	16	160	10.0
Miss G Kelleway	17	133	12.8	F Norton	14	140	10.0

TRAINERS' PREFERENCES

The following are trainers' preferred races for horses engaged at more than one Boxing Day meeting: Hereford: 2.35 Smiley Face. Huntingdon: 12.30 Kamikaze; 1.00 Tristan's Comet; 1.30 Cantoris Frater, Houghton. 2.00 Korbell. Kempton: 2.45 Mister Drum; 3.15 Cokenny Boy, Lansdowne, Peatswood. Market Rasen: 12.30 Chorus Line; 1.35 Sudden Spin; 2.05 Andre Laval; 2.35 Majority Major, Noosa Sound; 3.05 Denham Hill, Malta Man, Northern Star, Shaagni Ana; 3.35 Garlandhayes. Sedgefield: 12.40 Ski Path, Tribune; 2.10 Kings Sermon; 3.10 Dual Image, Glenvally. Wetherby: 12.45 Menaldi; 1.45 Ralitsa; 2.45 Cumbrian Challenge; 3.15 Torch Vert. Wolverhampton: 1.00 Ballyline, Hangover, King's Shilling; 1.30 The Shy Padre; 3.30 Yet Again.

WOLVERHAMPTON

THUNDERER

1.00 Mammy's Choice. 1.30 Father Sky. 2.00 Callisoe Bay. 2.30 Korbell. 3.00 Furietto. 3.30 Stash The Cash.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT SIS

1.00 NEW JUMPING COURSE'S NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£5,857: 2m 4f 110yd) (10 runners)

1 11-3 THE MINE CAPTAIN 24 (D,F,G) O Sherwood 9-11-10 J Osborne
2 334U HOLY WANDERER 3 (F,G) T George 7-11-8 R Farrant
3 /11 MAMMY'S CHOICE 17 (S) R Alner 8-11-7 P Henley (3)
4 122F BALLYLINE 30 (G) W Kemp 5-11-0 J Callaghan
5 332F WILLIE MAKEIT 9 (D,F,G) R Phillips 6-10-9 J Railton
6 254P KING'S SHILLING 20 (F,G,S) H Oliver 9-10-5 Jacqui Oliver
7 4-3P HANGOVER 20 (G,S) R Lee 10-10-1 G Hogan (3)
8 6503 SAYMORE 7 (F,G,S) W Clay 10-10-0 T Eley
9 0245 TOTAL ASSET 16 A Forbes 6-10-0 Gary Lyons
10 3400 SAKBAH 16 J Pickering 7-10-0 M Brennan

2-1 Mammy's Choice, 11-4 The Mine Captain, 6-1 Holy Wanderer, 8-1 Ballyline, Willie Makeit, 10-1 Hangover, 14-1 others.

1.30 PLYVINE CATERING NOVICES CHASE (£7,100: 3m 1f) (8)

1 1322 FATHER SKY 12 (B,F) O Sherwood 5-11-6 J Osborne
2 2480 GEORGE ASHFORD 8 (F,G) P Johnson 6-11-5 M Sharratt
3 00-1 NOYAN 17 (F,G) R Fahey 6-11-5 J Railton
4 040- KAMIKAZE 221F (G) K Bailey 6-11-0 2nd pref
5 5-2F THE SHY PADRE 15 Mrs J Pitman 7-11-0 R Farrant
6 -F52 WIXOE WONDER 20 M Bradstock 6-11-0 P Henley
7 0P-0 CAREYSVILLE 24 T George 5-10-13 —
8 P0-0 MASKED MARTIN 14 P Rodford 5-10-13 S Burrough

6-4 Father Sky, 9-4 Noyan, 5-1 The Shy Padre, 6-1 Kamikaze, 8-1 George Ashford, 12-1 Wixoe Wonder, 20-1 others.

2.00 HARRY BROWN MEMORIAL CHALLENGE CUP HANDICAP CHASE (£14,070: 2m) (9)

1 0U-2 CLAY COUNTY 68 (D,F,G,S) M Hammond 11-12-0 R Garritty
2 P-43 SOUND REVEILLE 12 (D,G,S) C Brooks 8-11-8 M Berry (7)
3 -122 CALLISOE BAY 13 (D,F,G,S) O Sherwood 7-11-7 J Osborne
4 224- TIME WON'T WAIT 232 (D,F,G) R Phillips 7-11-6 J Railton
5 3312 THUMBS UP 24 (D,F,G,S) N Twiston-Davies

2.30 HAGUE FASTENERS NOVICES HURDLE (£2,640: 3m 1f) (10)

1 2213 ANTARCTIC WIND 23 (F) M Hammond 6-11-3 R Garritty
2 16-1 LANCE ARMSTRONG 22 (G,S) G McCourt 6-11-3 J Osborne
3 3133 PRUSSIA 5 (F) W Clay 5-11-3 T Eley
4 0-0 DECEIT THE SECOND 14 P Rodford 4-10-12 S Burrough
5 0/ GINGE 234P Miss J Bower 7-10-12 Gary Lyons
6 P-0 MOOR DANCE MAN 26 N Lillmoden 6-10-12 Mr D Verco
7 P02- TORCH VERT 47F N Walker 4-10-12 2nd pref
8 004 WEATHER WISE 33 W G M Turner 4-10-12 J Railton
9 -405 BLAZING MIRACLE 8 Mrs R Henderson 4-10-7 Mr W Henderson
10 2 KORBELL 17 (F,G,S) P Nicholls 7-10-7 L Cummins (7)

9-4 Korbell, 11-4 Lance Armstrong, 5-1 Prussia, 11-2 Antarctic Wind, 8-1 Blazing Miracle, 12-1 Weather Wise, 20-1 others

3.00 DUNSTALL PARK'S JUMPING AGAIN SELLING HURDLE (£2,547: 2m) (14)

1 -2F2 FURIETTO 8 (BF,F) M Hammond 6-11-3 R Garritty
2 FF50 AL HELAL 16 (V) J Jenkins 4-10-12 R Farrant
3 3F00 FOLLOW DE CALL 20 D McCain 6-10-12 P Henley (3)
4 44-P IL TRASTEVERE 10 Miss G Kelleway 4-10-12 A Bates (5)
5 4 LAST ROUNDUP 15 C Thornton 4-10-12 N Horrocks (7)
6 0020 NIGHT BOAT 8 W Clay 5-10-12 T Eley
7 0P-5 PRINCE RICO 78 D McCain 5-10-12 A Larnach
8 /P-P SCBOO 47 R Peacock 7-10-12 J Callaghan
9 02/ SHAAGNI ANA 621 J Smyth-Osbourne 5-10-12 2nd pref
10 4 TE AMO 14 M Pipe 4-10-12 J Osborne
11 0-04 TEE TEE TOO 17 A Carroll 4-10-12 J Railton
12 0050 YOUNG BENSON 34 (V) T Wall 4-10-12 M Berry (7)
13 U535 FENIAN COURT 15 (BF,B) Miss J Bower 5-10-7 Gary Lyons
14 GARLANDHAYES 205F Miss K George 4-10-7 2nd pref

11-4 Furietto, 5-1 Te Amo, 6-1 Last Roundup, 8-1 Il Trastevere, Fenian Court, Night Boat, 12-1 others.

3.30 BOXING DAY HANDICAP HURDLE (£4,200: 2m) (9)

1 1144 YUBRALEE 29 (D,F,G,S) M Pipe 4-11-13 J Osborne
2 -211 STASH THE CASH 17 (D,F,G,S) M Hammond 5-11-9 R Garritty
3 211 YET AGAIN 14 (F,G) Miss G Kelleway 4-11-7 —
4 F-UF WINDWARD ARIOM 103 (B,D,F,G,S) P Mitchell 10-11-7 A Larnach
5 4113 RANGITIKEI 28 (D,G) C Mann 5-11-2 J Railton
6 -F31 OUT ON A PROMISE 13 (D,F) N Walker 4-10-13 R Farrant
7 2-U0 JEMIMA PUDDLEDUCK 16 (D,G) A Streeter 5-10-6 T Eley
8 -210 SUPERMICK 28 (D,BF,G,S) W Muir 5-10-0 A Bates (5)
9 0PP2 SHIFTING MOON 22 (F) F Jordan 4-10-0 P Henley (3)

5-2 Yet Again, 7-2 Stash The Cash, Yubralee, 5-1 Rangitikei, 8-1 Out On A Promise, 10-1 Shifting Moon, 14-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: M Pipe, 3 winners from 9 runners, 33.3%, R Lee, 3 from 14, 21.4%. Only qualifiers.

JOCKEYS: J Osborne, 10 winners from 23 rides, 43.5%.

☐ A further two all-weather meetings have been added to the week's programme as the British Horseracing Board seeks to beat a spate of potential abandonments. The extra fixtures are at Southwell tomorrow and Wolverhampton on Saturday. There are now three consecutive all-weather race meetings over the Christmas period.

HEREFORD

THUNDERER

1.05 Melstock Meggie. 1.35 Khatir. 2.05 Kadastrof. 2.35 Raven's Roost. 3.05 Ardent Love. 3.35 Allow.

GOING: GOOD (7.30AM INSPECTION)

1.05 GOOSE NOVICES HURDLE (£2,962: 2m 3f 110yd) (16 runners)

1 -113 MELSTOCK MEGGIE 15 (S) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-0 G Hogan (3)
2 1-5 ARCTIC TRIUMPH 31 (G) M Bradstock 5-10-12 L Harvey
3 21/ CARROTS 684P (S) Mrs A King 10-10-12 Mr O McPhail (7)
4 COUNTRY LOVER 61F (V) M Pipe 5-10-12 D Walsh
5 5-24 DENHAM HILL 24 C Mann 5-10-12 2nd pref
6 4-22 FINE SIR 19 (BF) T Thomson Jones 6-10-12 D Leahy
7 00 LOOK IN THE MIRROR 34 N Twiston-Davies 5-10-12 C Llewellyn
8 /00 MINGAY 29 Graham Richards 5-10-12 J Prior (7)
9 /33- PROFESSOR PAGE 404 T Thomson Jones 6-10-12 E Husband (3)
10 3-40 SPRING DOUBLE 24 (G) N Twiston-Davies 5-10-12 C Llewellyn
11 6 STORMYFAIRWEATHER 36 N Henderson 4-10-12 —
12 2/3 TRISTRAM'S IMAGE 26 (BF) N Henderson 5-10-12 Mr C Vigors (5)
13 0F-4 ARIOSO 36 J Needham 8-10-7 —
14 6PPP LILLY THE FILLY 8 Mrs B Waring 5-10-7 P McLoughlin
15 30-0 LOVE THE BLUES 82 (BF) D Nicholson 4-10-7 Mr R Thornton (5)
16 3 SLIPPERY FIN 24 W G M Turner 4-10-7 J Power (7)

9-4 Country Lover, 4-1 Love The Blues, 5-1 Fine Sir, Tristram's Image, 6-1 Melstock Meggie, 10-1 Spring Double, 12-1 others.

1.35 MINCE PIE SELLING HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,290: 3m 2f) (9)

1 0F-0 WHITEBONNET 31 (B,S) C Egerton 6-12-0 C Llewellyn
2 -623 QUIET MISTRESS 7 (B,S) W Bethell 6-11-11 Mr R Thornton (5)
3 0-04 KHATIR 8 (V,F,G,S) M Pipe 5-11-8 D Walsh
4 -053 STRIKE-A-POSE 10 (S) B Llewellyn 6-11-6 Mr J L Llewellyn
5 2231 DRAGONMIST 29 (H,S) D Burchell 6-11-2 D J Burchell
6 200- CHILLY LAD 23F R Juckes 5-11-1 E Husband (3)
7 0060 MY SHENANDOAH 8 (BF) H Oliver 5-10-12 Jacqui Oliver
8 0350 AWESTRUCK 17 (B) B Preece 6-10-1 G Hogan (3)
9 PPP- STRATTON FLYER 244 H Howe 6-10-0 L Harvey

5-2 Dragonmist, 4-1 Quiet Mistress, 9-2 Khatir, 5-1 Whitebonnet, 8-1 Strike-A-Pose, My Shenandoah, 10-1 Chilly Lad, 16-1 others.

2.05 PLUM PUDDING NOVICES CHASE (£3,177: 2m) (9)

1 4344 DECYBORG 8 M Pipe 5-11-5 D Walsh
2 2PP1 CAPTAIN STOCKFORD 6 (CD,S) P Wegmann 9-11-5 D J Kavanagh (5)
3 /0P5 ARABIAN BOLD 3 (F,G,S) R Juckes 8-10-12 E Husband (3)
4 066P HUGH DANIELS 55 (V,G) B Preece 8-10-12 Mr A Wintle (7)
5 4-6F ICE MAGIC 51 (V) F Yardley 9-10-12 L Harvey
6 50-2 KADASTROF 12 (S) R Dickin 6-10-12 D Leahy
7 0-4P KINO'S CROSS 20 (S) A J Wilson 7-10-12 G Hogan (3)
8 0-56 PURBECK CAVALIER 20 (B,S) R Alner 7-10-12 Mr R Thornton (5)
9 00-4 SPEEDWELL PRINCE 26 (F) N Twiston-Davies 6-10-12 C Llewellyn

9-4 Speedwell Prince, 4-1 Kadastrof, 9-2 Decyborg, 5-1 Captain Stockford, 7-1 Arabian Bold, Kino's Cross, 16-1 Purbeck Cavalier, 20-1 others.

2.35 BLANDFORD BETTING NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,864: 2m 1f) (14)

1 30-F NAGARA SOUND 88 B Preece 5-11-11 Mr R Thornton (5)
2 5/ SNOWSHILL SHAKER 1006 N Twiston-Davies 7-11-9 C Llewellyn
3 4-56 LEWIN JANNE 28 P Ritchens 5-11-7 S Fox
4 630- HOWQUA RIVER 30F P Chapple-Hyam 4-11-6 —
5 4133 ALMAPA 56 (D,F) R Hodges 4-11-6 T Dascombe (3)
6 FP43 COUNTRY MINSTREL 8 S Dow 5-11-0 C Rae (7)
7 1525 RAVEN'S ROOST 20 (CD,BF,F) G Jones 5-11-0 P McLoughlin
8 -30U SAAFI 37 R Baker 5-10-13 D Leahy
9 3502 THE DEACONESS 20 Mrs A King 5-10-9 Mr O McPhail (7)
10 2323 MR POPPLETON 26 R Brotherton 7-10-5 L Harvey
11 -P00 ROYAL GLINT 20 H Haynes 7-10-3 G Hogan (3)
12 5-04 SMILEY FACE 8 R Hodges 4-10-3 D J Burchell
13 -000 THE BREWER 20 J Tuck 4-10-3 D J Kavanagh (5)
14 -004 STORM TIGER 19 S Mellor 5-10-0 E Husband (3)

4-1 Raven's Roost, 5-1 Mr Poppleton, 6-1 Country Minstrel, 7-1 Nagara Sound, Snowshill Shaker, 8-1 Levin Janne, 10-1 others

3.05 TOTE NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE (£3,794: 3m 1f 110yd) (15)

1 51-3 LUGS BRANNIGAN 14 (F) M Bradstock 7-11-10 L Harvey
2 40-6 ARDENT LOVE 10 D Nicholson 7-11-6 Mr R Thornton (5)
3 254P KING'S SHILLING 20 (F,G,S) H Oliver 9-11-1 2nd pref
4 0-51 CERIDWEN 20 (CD,S) T Greathead 6-11-1 D Walsh
5 P-U2 THE WHOLE HOG 20 K Bailey 7-11-0 Mr R Wakley (7)
6 U1-3 JUST ONE CANALETTO 17 (CD,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 8-11-0 C Llewellyn
7 364- DARA'S COURSE 210 (F) Miss P Whittle 7-10-10 K Hibbert (7)
8 0462 COOL CHARACTER 14 (G) R Buckler 8-10-8 G Hogan (3)
9 3P-P OVER THE WREKIN 27 J Needham 9-10-8 —
10 -0PP KING'S COURTIER 9 (V) S Mellor 7-10-3 E Husband (3)
11 0-F0 BONNIFER 24 M Wilkinson 7-10-3 T J O'Sullivan
12 0002 IRISH PERRY 10 T Morton 9-10-3 P McLoughlin
13 UP33 CARDINAL RULE 29 Miss V Williams 7-10-2 D J Kavanagh
14 56-F FULL SHILLING 16 D Williams 7-10-0 M Clarke
15 /05 ABSOLATUM 20 (F,G) J Parfitt 9-10-0 D J Burchell

9-2 Lugs Brannigan, 5-1 Ardent Love, 6-1 Ceridwen, 7-1 Just One Canaletto, 8-1 The Whole Hog, Cool Character, 10-1 Bonnifer, 12-1 others.

3.35 HUGHES CATERERS HANDICAP HURDLE (£3,282: 2m 3f 110yd) (11)

1 -132 NORDIC BREEZE 50 (B,BF,F) M Pipe 4-11-12 D Walsh
2 -4P2 RAMSDENS 41 (BF,G) N Twiston-Davies 4-11-10 C Llewellyn
3 0F33 FLEUR DE TAL 28 (F,G) W G M Turner 5-11-4 J Power (7)
4 5141 ALLOW 27 (D,G,S) B Llewellyn 5-11-3 D J Kavanagh (5)
5 -P53 DAILY SPORT GIRL 10 (F,G,S) B Llewellyn 7-11-0 Mr J L Llewellyn
6 5265 SWAN STREET 14 C Mann 5-10-7 J Magee (3)
7 1 ZESTI 22 (G) T Clement 4-10-4 L Harvey
8 45-4 VISCOUNT TULLY 15 (S) C Jackson 11-10-2 Miss S Jackson
9 0203 BRIGHT SAPPHIRE 3 (F,G,S) D Burchell 10-10-0 D J Burchell
10 0338 BATTY'S ISLAND 48 (F,G,S) B Preece 7-10-0 J Mogford (7)
11 3450 AUVILLAR 36 (V,F,G,S) J Parfitt 8-10-0 D J Burchell

7-2 Allow, 4-1 Ramsdens, 5-1 Nordic Breeze, 6-1 Swan Street, 7-1 Fleur De Tal, 8-1 Zesti, 10-1 Bright Sapphire, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: N Henderson, 14 winners from 28 runners, 50.0%. C Mann, 3 from 6, 50.0%; M Pipe, 34 from 104, 32.7%; N Twiston-Davies, 27 from 89, 30.3%. D Nicholson, 10 from 35, 28.6%

JOCKEYS: C Llewellyn, 19 winners from 68 rides, 27.9%. P McLoughlin, 6 from 41, 14.6%. D J Burchell, 6 from 44, 13.6%; T Dascombe, 4 from 37, 10.8%. Only qualifiers.

SEDGEFIELD

THUNDERER

12.10 Good Hand. 12.40 Tribune. 1.10 Brighter Shade. 1.40 Longcroft. 2.10 Twin States. 2.40 Weaver George. 3.10 Eurotwist.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT (7.30AM INSPECTION)

12.10 STANLEY RACING GOLDEN NUMBERS SERIES NOVICES HURDLE (Div I: £1,953: 3m 3f 110yd (10 runners)

1 11 GOOD HAND 68F (F) S Kettlewell 10-11-12 G Lee (3)
2 0-22 BAHER 23F (BF) Mrs A Swinbank 7-10-12 J Supple
3 0051 BARNSTORMER 17 (B,F,G) E Elliott 10-10-12 G F Ryan (5)
4 5/P CHARLVIC 17 W Cunningham 6-10-12 L McGrath (7)
5 -340 CHILL FACTOR 26 Mrs M Reveley 6-10-12 G Cahill
6 3 ERNI 16 T Tate 4-10-12 R McCarthy (7)
7 2F2- KING FLY 236P Mrs Sarah Horner-Harker 6-10-12 M Foster
8 0/0- OLIVER'S MATE 356 P Dennis 6-10-12 N Smith
9 -400 POCAIRE GAOITHE 23 (V) W Storey 6-10-12 M Moloney
10 /00 WOODSTOCK LODGE 15 V Thompson 8-10-12 Mr M Thompson

5-2 Good Hand, 7-2 Erni, 6-1 Barnstormer, Baher, Chill Factor, 8-1 King Fly, 16-1 others

12.40 UNION HALL-SIENNA STUD HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,495: 2m 5f 110yd) (9)

1 3/ JOHNNY'S TURN 677P (G,S) J Norton 11-11-13 Mr N Kent
2 6-3F SUDDEN SPIN 8 (BF,G,S) J Norton 6-11-4 2nd pref
3 0/1 TRIBUNE 56 (CD,F,G) C Thornton 5-10-12 M Foster
4 0-01 TIRMIZI 8 (G,S) Mrs A Swinbank 5-10-11 (7ex) J Supple
5 1-30 BARTON HEIGHTS 10 (F,G) Mrs M Reveley 4-10-8 C McCormack (7)
6 /52 MANETTIA 16 (CD,F,G) Mrs M Reveley 7-10-7 G Cahill
7 -606 CULLIN CAPER 8 T Watson 4-10-0 Miss R Clark (7)
8 2U-P WORLD WITHOUT END 16 (D,S) M Sowersby 7-10-0 M Moloney
9 0-00 SKI PATH 8 N Bycroft 7-10-0 O Pears

3-1 Manettia, 7-2 Tribune, 4-1 Sudden Spin, 9-2 Barton Heights, 6-1 Tirmizi, 7-1 Johnny's Turn, 14-1 Cullin Caper, 20-1 others.

1.10 DURHAM INNS LTD MAIDEN CHASE (£3,309: 2m 5f) (13)

1 260F ARISTODEMUS 24 Mrs L Marshall 7-11-10 M Foster
2 16 BRIGHTER SHADE 45 (F) Mrs M Reveley 6-11-10 G Cahill
3 P004 CLONROCHE LUCKY 8 J Wade 6-11-10 K Jones
4 PP-U COOLRENY 10 V Thompson 7-11-10 Mr M Thompson
5 PP-0 DESPERATE DAYS 15 F Kirby 7-11-10 W Dwan
6 2 DRY HILL LAD 22 J Norton 5-11-10 W Fry
7 5F53 FAIR ALLY 7 M Sowersby 6-11-10 M Moloney
8 114- FERN LEADER 250P (G,S) Mrs A Swinbank 6-11-10 J Supple
9 /P/ MOST RICH 229P B Ellison 6-11-10 T Reed
10 00-5 NOOSA SOUND 15 L Lungo 6-11-10 2nd pref
11 U2FF ROYAL HAND 7 R Armson 6-11-10 Mr R Armson
12 SAFETY FACTOR J Howard Johnson 8-11-10 G F Ryan (5)
13 0-00 SELDOM BUT SEVERE 26 E Elliott 6-11-10 E Callaghan (3)

9-4 Brighter Shade, 4-1 Dry Hill Lad, 9-2 Safety Factor, 6-1 Fern Leader, 12-1 Most Rich, 16-1 Fair Ally, Royal Hand, 20-1 others

1.40 STANLEY RACING GOLDEN NUMBERS NOVICES HURDLE (Div II: £1,935: 3m 3f 110yd) (9)

1 31-0 DAISY DAYS 15 (G,S) J Howard Johnson 5-11-0 G Cahill
2 15 LONGCROFT 96F (BF,G) S Kettlewell 4-11-0 G Lee (3)
3 0-03 ADIB 15 (S) G Moore 6-10-12 S Haworth (7)
4 00-6 IRISH BUZZ 16 Mrs A Swinbank 4-10-12 Mr Chris Wilson
5 5/P LIAM'S LOSS 16 J Parkes 7-10-12 E Callaghan (3)
6 6-24 MOVIE MAN 43 J Turner 4-10-12 W Fry
7 P500 RUBER 15 (F,G,S) R Thomson 9-10-12 T Reed
8 P0 DEAR JEAN 29 (S) M Sowersby 6-10-7 Miss P Robson
9 0/ KNOCKREIGH CROSS 1058 B Rothwell 7-10-7 C McCormack (7)

5-2 Longcroft, 11-4 Daisy Days, 7-2 Adib, 9-2 Movie Man, 12-1 others

2.10 NORTH YORKSHIRE BREWING COMPANY BORO BEST HANDICAP CHASE (£3,488: 3m 3f) (9)

1 -P65 SON OF IRIS 16 (C,BF,F,G) Mrs M Reveley 8-11-10 N Smith
2 -6FF MARCHWOOD 7 (G,S) N Chamberlain 9-11-10 T Reed
3 PP-U TWIN STATES 22 (CD,F,G,S) J Turner 7-11-10 W Fry
4 2-UU CHOISTY 16 Mrs A Swinbank 6-11-4 Mr Chris Wilson
5 13P4 JENDEE 6 (CD,F,S) B Ellison 8-11-0 G Cahill
6 1-P6 HURRICANE ANDREW 29 (F,G,S) J Moore 8-10-12 Mr N Wilson
7 6-36 KINGS SERMON 16 P Beaumont 7-10-4 E Callaghan (3)
8 5U41 DAWN LAD 16 (C,G) Mrs A Swinbank 7-10-3 J Supple
9 5-PP SNOOK POINT 6 (G) D Lamb 9-10-1 J Burke

3-1 Dawn Lad, 4-1 Kings Sermon, 5-1 Choisty, 6-1 Son Of Iris, Marchwood, Jendee, 10-1 others.

2.40 RENT ROLL CUP HANDICAP CHASE (£2,900: 2m 110yd) (6)

1 -241 WEAVER GEORGE 16 (CD,F,G) W Storey 6-12-0 M Moloney
2 2413 FULL O'PRAISE 22 (CD,BF,F,G) P Calver 8-11-13 T Reed
3 5/2 COVER POINT 10 (F,S) J Fitzgerald 5-11-2 W Dwan
4 3U23 VAL DE RAMA 33 (C,F,G) Denys Smith 7-11-1 G Cahill
5 4P3- CHILL WIND 345 (F,G) N Bycroft 7-10-13 J Supple
6 0-50 SUPER SANDY 29 (D,S) F Walton 9-10-9 K Johnson

2-1 Weaver George, 5-2 Cover Point, 4-1 Full O'Praise, Val De Rama, 8-1 others.

3.10 HALLGARTH MANOR HOTEL HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,268: 2m 1f) (10)

1 /06 DUAL IMAGE 10 (F,G,S) J Fitzgerald 9-12-0 W Dwan
2 P-53 EUROTWIST 26 (CD,G,S) S Kettlewell 7-11-12 G Lee (3)
3 1521 FEN TERRIER 7 (F,G,S) F Murtagh 4-11-10 (7ex) E Callaghan (3)
4 135- EUROLINK THE REBEL 213 (F) S Clark 4-11-8 Miss R Clark (7)
5 P-42 DUKE OF PERTH 8 (G) J Howard Johnson 5-10-12 G F Ryan (5)
6 10-4 GYMCRAK TIGER 49 (F,G) G Holmes 6-10-11 T Reed
7 05-P GALLARDINI 27 (D,G) B Rothwell 7-10-8 J Supple
8 1421 GLENVALLY 20 (G) B Murray 5-10-6 M Foster
9 2-33 HERE COMES HERBIE 6 W Storey 4-10-6 M Moloney
10 /0 MAPLE BAY 8 B Ellison 7-10-0 G Cahill

7-2 Fen Terrier, 9-2 Here Comes Herbie, 5-1 Eurotwist, Duke Of Perth, 7-1 Gymcrak Tiger, Glenvally, 8-1 Dual Image, 10-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: Mrs M Reveley, 70 winners from 239 runners, 29.3%. T Tate, 6 from 21, 28.6%; C Thornton, 6 from 23, 26.1%, J Fitzgerald, 13 from 51, 25.5%, P Beaumont, 17 from 86, 19.8%

JOCKEYS: G Lee, 9 winners from 39 rides, 23.1%, J Supple, 12 from 73, 16.4%, N Smith, 13 from 93, 14.0%. T Reed, 12 from 92, 13.0%. B Grattan, 3 from 23, 13.0%, M Foster, 3 from 23, 13.0%.

HUNTINGDON

THUNDERER

12.30 Wisley Wonder. 1.00 Topsawyer. 1.30 Sugar Hill. 2.00 Flying Gunner. 2.30 Scoresheet. 3.00 Skycab.

GOING: GOOD (7.30AM INSPECTION)

12.30 CHRISTMAS TIDE NOVICES CHASE (£3,560: 2m 4f 110yd) (9 runners)

1 1211 MISTER DRUM 20 (CD,F,G,S) M Wilkinson 7-11-12 2nd pref
2 34-4 FLIPPANCE 20 N Gaselee 6-10-12 W Marston
3 2-43 HAUNTING MUSIC 17 (G) Mrs A Perrett 8-10-12 D Gallagher
4 F-P2 JAC DEL PRINCE 29 P Nicholls 6-10-12 J Lawrence
5 4U JOLLY BOAT 6 (F,G,S) F Jordan 9-10-12 L Aspell (3)
6 040- KAMIKAZE 221F (B,G) K Bailey 6-10-12 A Thornton
7 0-04 SAFEGLIDE 8 J Gifford 6-10-12 P Hide
8 5-2F THE SHY PADRE 15 Mrs J Pitman 7-10-12 2nd pref
9 U432 WISLEY WONDER 19 (B,BF,F,G,S) N Twiston-Davies 6-10-12 D Bridgwater

1-2 Wisley Wonder, 5-1 Haunting Music, 7-1 Jac Del Prince, 10-1 Kamikaze, Flippance, 12-1 others.

1.00 CHRISTMAS BOX HANDICAP HURDLE (£2,213: 2m 5f 110yd) (10)

1 -664 MANEREE 17 (C,D,F,G,S) N Callaghan 9-12-0 R Massey (3)
2 0/1 TRIBUNE 58 (D,F,G) C Thornton 5-12-0 2nd pref
3 /15- TOPSAWYER 349 (F,G) Miss S Hall 8-11-13 A Thornton
4 13-0 CAMBO 21 (D,F,G,S) M Banks 10-11-11 I Lawrence
5 640- BOYFRIEND 282 (F) Mrs J Pitman 6-11-9 W Marston
6 12P4 FIRST CRACK 22 (CD,F,G,S) F Jordan 11-11-4 L Aspell (3)
7 04-0 TRISTAN'S COMET 200 (G,S) J L Harris 9-10-13 D Gallagher
8 -330 KATBALLOU 14 K Wingrove 7-10-0 Ann Stokell
9 5/U THE WEATHERMAN 38 A Jessop 8-10-0 J R Kavanagh
10 /FU SCORPION BAY 30 D French Davis 8-10-0 A Bates (5)

3-1 First Crack, 7-2 Topsawyer, 4-1 Maneree, 6-1 Boyfriend, 7-1 Cambo, 8-1 Katballou, 10-1 Tristan's Comet, 12-1 others.

1.30 BEDFORD LODGE HOTEL HANDICAP CHASE (£3,264. 3m) (12)

1 /3-U YEOMAN WARRIOR 13 (S) R Rowe 9-11-10 D O'Sullivan
2 251- CANTORIS FRATER 393 (F,S) Mrs J Pitman 9-11-9 W Marston
3 30/ DARREN THE BRAVE 604 (D,S) C Brooks 8-11-8 D Gallagher
4 -214 SOLO GENT 14 (CD,F,G,S) A Jones 7-11-3 D Bridgwater
5 6433 HOUGHTON 22 (F,G,S) W Jenks 10-11-2 Mr R Burton (7)
6 1/6- TRIBAL RULER 426 (D,F,G,S) D McCain 11-10-12 —
7 2521 SUGAR HILL 16 (CD,S) J Gifford 6-10-12 P Hide
8 3-12 EASTERN RIVER 24 (BF,G,S) T Forster 10-10-7 A Thornton
9 /40 RUBINS BOY 19 (F) N Walker 10-10-2 D Finnegan (7)
10 21-5 PANT LLIN 3 (CD,F) F Jordan 10-10-2 L Aspell (3)
11 6211 CALL ME RIVER 14 (D,G) P Hedger 8-10-1 I Lawrence
12 84-0 NIGHT FANCY 8 Mrs A Woodrow 8-10-0 J R Kavanagh

7-2 Call Me River, 9-2 Cantoris Frater, 5-1 Sugar Hill, 6-1 Solo Gent, 7-1 Eastern River, 8-1 Darren The Brave, 10-1 others.

2.00 FESTIVE SPIRIT NATIONAL HUNT NOVICES HURDLE (£2,740: 3m 2f) (11)

1 -212 FLYING GUNNER 34 (BF,S) D Nicholson 5-11-5 R Massey (3)
2 0-21 SALMON BREEZE 33 (F,G) N Henderson 5-11-5 J R Kavanagh
3 30-6 BANK AVENUE 19 Mrs J Pitman 5-10-12 W Marston
4 60 BURFORDS FOR SCRAP 24 R Dickin 4-10-12 X Aizpuru (7)
5 00-P CLASSIC JESTER 190 R Champion 5-10-12 P Hide
6 6060 MONTECOT 75 S Mellor 7-10-12 N Mann
7 31-0 NORTHERN STAR 19 (F) J Pickering 5-10-12 2nd pref
8 3-60 SAMMORELLO 19 N Twiston-Davies 5-10-12 D Bridgwater
9 2 KORBELL 17 (F,G,S) P Nicholls 7-10-7 L Cummins (7)
10 0-33 LADY HIGH SHERIFF 30 T Forster 6-10-7 Mr C Ward Thomas
11 0-03 PAVLOVA 22 R Rowe 6-10-7 D O'Sullivan

2-1 Korbell, 3-1 Flying Gunner, 7-2 Salmon Breeze, 8-1 Sammorello, Bank Avenue, 10-1 Pavlova, 12-1 Lady High Sheriff, 14-1 others.

2.30 BOXING DAY HANDICAP CHASE (£2,868 2m 110yd) (6)

1 P-P5 MONDAY CLUB 26 (D,F,G,S) J Tuck 12-11-11. S McNeill
2 -P42 CORRARDER 3 (D,F,G) J Smyth-Osbourne 12-11-11 W Marston
3 1243 CRAFTY CHAPLAIN 10 (D,F,B,S) D McCain 10-11-8 D Bridgwater
4 /1-1 SCORESHEET 31 (D,F,G) J Gifford 6-11-4 P Hide
5 F45P SHREWD JOHN 44 (CD,F,G) Miss K George 10-11-2 J R Kavanagh
6 43-3 DANTE'S VIEW 8 (F) P Hedger 8-11-2 D O'Sullivan

5-4 Scoresheet, 5-2 Dante's View, 5-1 Crafty Chaplain, 6-1 Corrarder, 14-1 Shrewd John.

3.00 MISTLETOE STANDARD OPEN NATIONAL HUNT FLAT RACE (£1,508: 2m 110yd) (17)

1 41- DUBLIN FREDDY 315 (D,S) Miss V Williams 5-11-11 A Thornton
2 1 THE LADY CAPTAIN 20 (G) D Thom 4-11-6 D Gallagher
3 IN THE VAN Mrs D Haine 4-11-4 R Massey (3)
4 0- LUDO'S ORCHESTRA 260 M Campion 5-11-4 L Aspell (3)
5 MAJESTIC AFFAIR N Henderson 4-11-4 J R Kavanagh
6 MUALLAF Mrs A Woodrow 4-11-4 —
7 244- MY BUSTER 262 Miss S Hall 4-11-4 P Midgley
8 SILLE ME G Hubbard 4-11-4 N Rossiter (7)
9 SKYCAB J Gifford 4-11-4 P Hide
10 WELSH ASSET K Wingrove 5-11-4 J Ryan
11 WISLEY WARRIOR N Twiston-Davies 5-11-4 D Bridgwater
12 0 AINTGOTWON 31 A Hide 5-10-13 D O'Sullivan
13 ARTIC MEADOW A Jessop 5-10-13 X Aizpuru (7)
14 HOT 'N SAUCY A Jones 4-10-13 W Marston
15 0 LUCRATIVE PERK 19 Miss C Caroe 4-10-13 I Lawrence
16 5-6 MAGGIE STRAIT 8 Mrs A King 4-10-13 L Cummins (7)
17 0 SWEET MOUNT 19 N Twiston-Davies 4-10-13 L Suthern (7)

3-1 Wisley Warrior, 7-2 Dublin Freddy, 5-1 Majestic Affair, 6-1 Skycab, My Buster, 8-1 The Lady Captain, 10-1 Sille Me, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: K Bailey, 21 winners from 59 runners, 35.6%; N Henderson, 10 from 37, 27.0%, D Nicholson, 12 from 50, 24.0%; F Jordan, 3 from 13, 23.1%; J Gifford, 16 from 70, 22.9%, Mrs J Pitman, 8 from 36, 22.2%, N Callaghan, 3 from 14, 21.4%.

JOCKEYS: P Hide, 17 winners from 55 rides, 30.9%, L Aspell, 5 from 19, 26.3%, W Marston, 10 from 50, 20.0%, A Thornton, 6 from 34, 17.6%, J Titley, 4 from 23, 17.4%; S McNeill, 9 from 52, 17.3%, J Ryan, 7 from 41, 17.1%

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AMERICAN FOOTBALL: SEASON RECORD FOR RICE HELPS TO PUT SAN FRANCISCO IN MOOD FOR PLAY-OFFS

Young leads charge as 49ers rout Detroit

By Our Sports Staff

SAN Francisco 49ers, their place in the play-offs already secure for the thirteenth time in 14 years, completed the National Football League (NFL) regular season with a 24-14 victory over Detroit Lions.

The 49ers had already been guaranteed their post-season place when Carolina Panthers claimed the National Football Conference West division title, and they warmed up for their wild-card match at home to Philadelphia Eagles with a straightforward victory on Monday night that will be best remembered by the three players who reached individual landmarks.

Steve Young, the 49ers quarterback, won another passing title and Jerry Rice, his team-mate, finished with the NFL season's record for receptions before they took the rest of the night off and watched Barry Sanders, the Detroit running back, win his third rushing championship.

Young, who played for the first half only, threw for two touchdowns as Rice hung on to beat Herman Moore, his Detroit counterpart, for the reception title.

Sanders ran for 175 yards, including a 54-yard touchdown, to finish with 1,553 yards for the season, overtaking Terrell Davis, of Denver Broncos, who recorded 1,538. It was Sanders's third successive season with at least 1,500 rushing yards — the first time that has been achieved in NFL history.

Young completed 11 of 14 passes for 96 yards and one-yard touchdowns to Ted Popson and Derek Loville. Young finished with a passing rating of 97.2, beating Brett Favre, of Green Bay Packers (95.8), for his fifth title in six years. Rice had five catches for 49 yards to boost his total to 108, two more than Moore, who had eight receptions to finish with 106.

San Francisco opened the game impressively, sacking Scott Mitchell twice and forcing a Detroit punt. Consecutive completions of 11 yards to Rice and 15 yards to Brent Jones advanced the ball to the one-yard line, and two plays later Young threw to Popson for a touchdown.

Sanders levelled the score on the next series, but Young regained the lead for the 49ers with a scoring pass to Loville. The 49ers maintained a 14-7 half-time lead after a 41-yard field goal attempt by Jason Hanson sailed wide in the final seconds of the second quarter.

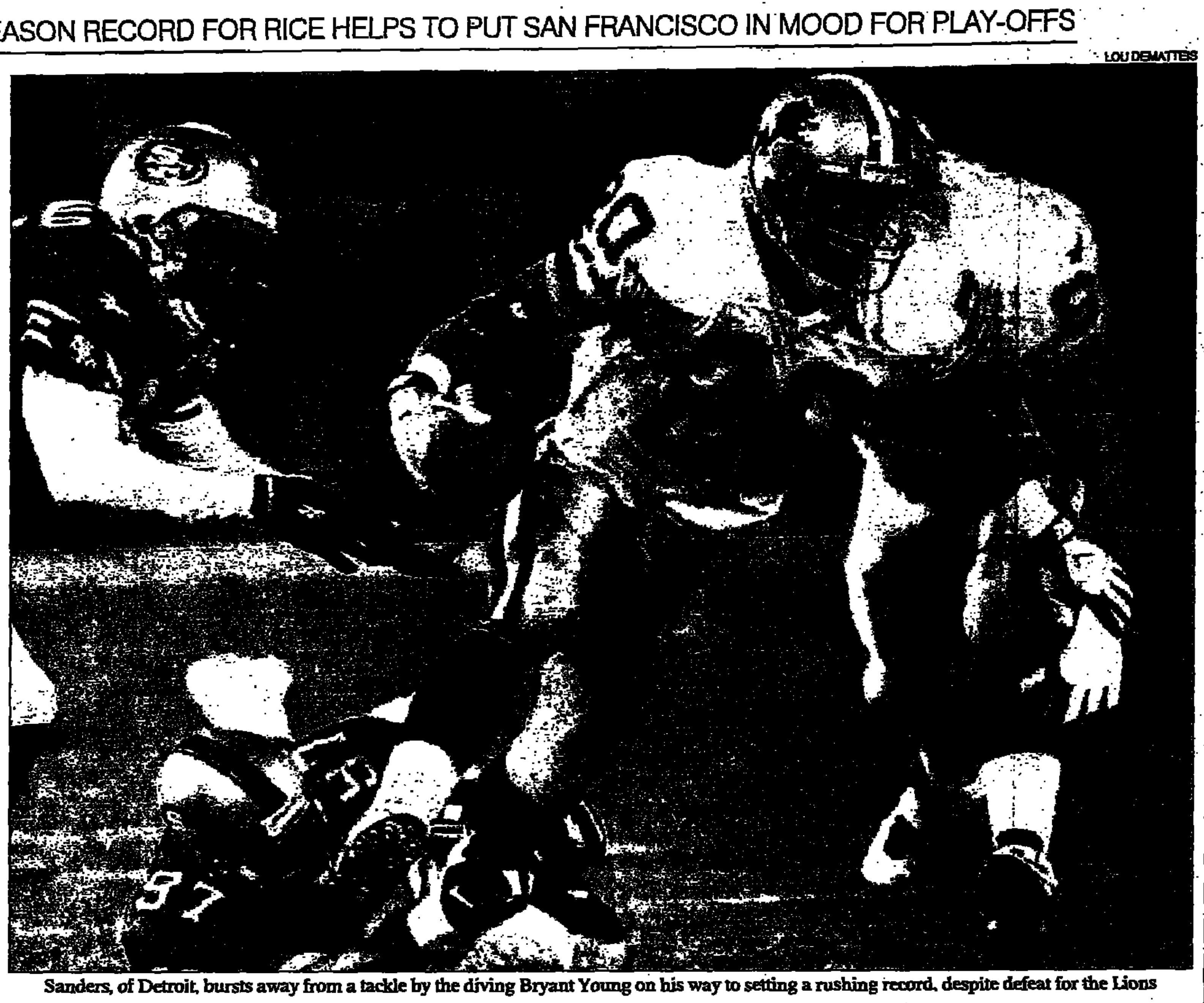
Elvis Grbac went on to lead the 49ers to another score, finishing a third-quarter drive with a six-yard touchdown on a quarterback draw for a 21-7 lead. Detroit answered with Mitchell's five-yard scoring pass to Moore, but Jeff Wilkins made the game safe for the 49ers with a 49-yard field goal.

Wayne Fontes, the coach, is now expected to be dismissed by the Lions, who finished bottom of the NFC Central division with a 5-11 record, having lost nine of their final ten matches. If he does go, it would mean that more than a quarter of the coaches in the NFL would have lost their jobs since the start of the season.

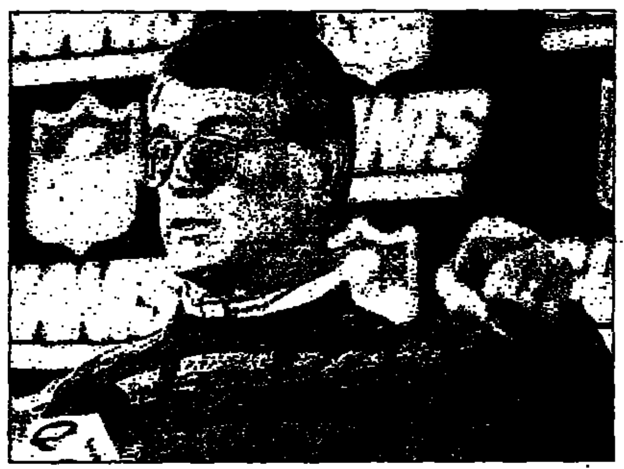
The latest casualty is Mike White, who was removed by Oakland Raiders to become the fifth coach to lose his job in five days. White joined Dan Reeves, of New York Giants, June Jones, of Atlanta Falcons, Rich Brooks, of St Louis Cardinals, and Rich Kotite, who resigned as coach of New York Jets. Earlier in the season Dave Shula was dismissed by Cincinnati Bengals and Jim Mora resigned from New Orleans Saints.

Among the possible replacements for White are Joe Bugel, the Raiders' assistant head coach for offence, and Dennis Green, who has expressed an interest in the job should he leave Minnesota Vikings.

LOU DEMATTEIS



Sanders, of Detroit, bursts away from a tackle by the diving Bryant Young on his way to setting a rushing record, despite defeat for the Lions



Reeves speaks out after his dismissal by New York Giants

RESULTS AND TABLES

RESULT (Monday): San Francisco 24, Detroit 14.

American Conference

Eastern division

	W	L	F	A
† New England	11	5	418	313
Buffalo	10	6	319	266
Indianapolis	9	7	317	334
Miami	8	8	339	325
NY Jets	1	15	279	454

Central division

	W	L	F	A
† Pittsburgh	10	6	344	257
Jacksonville	9	7	325	335
Cincinnati	8	8	372	369
Houston	8	8	345	319
Baltimore	4	12	371	441

Western division

	W	L	F	A
§ Denver	13	3	391	275
Kansas City	9	7	297	300
San Diego	8	8	310	376
Oakland	7	9	340	293
Seattle	7	9	317	376

National Conference

Eastern division

	W	L	F	A
† Dallas	10	6	286	250
Philadelphia	10	6	363	341
Washington	9	7	364	312
Arizona	7	9	300	397
NY Giants	6	10	242	297

Central division

	W	L	F	A
§ Green Bay	13	3	456	210
Minnesota	9	7	298	315
Chicago	7	9	283	305
Tampa Bay	6	10	221	293
Detroit	5	11	302	368

Western division

† Carolina	12	4	0	367	218
San Francisco	12	4	0	398	257
St Louis	6	10	0	303	409
Atlanta	3	13	0	309	461
New Orleans	3	13	0	229	339

§ Conference title † Divisional title

PLAY-OFFS: Wild-card games: NFC: Dallas v Minnesota; San Francisco v Philadelphia. AFC: Buffalo v Jacksonville; Pittsburgh v Indianapolis.

IN BRIEF

Adams set to appeal over fine by Derbyshire

CHRIS ADAMS, the Derbyshire batsman, is to appeal against the county's decision to fine him after his disclosures of why he wants to leave. Adams has asked the Test and County Cricket Board to look into the matter, believing that he has not breached the terms of his contract.

Adams, 26, offered to pay around £50,000 to be released from the remaining two years of his contract. His offer was refused and he was fined £1,000 after he had made known that he believes his international ambitions would be best served with a move.

Boardman top

Cycling: Chris Boardman, the world 4,000 metres pursuit champion and record holder, has been voted sportsman of the year by the International Association of Cycling Journalists. The Briton beat Miguel Induráin, the Olympic time-trial champion and five-times Tour de France winner, by three votes.

Lance Armstrong, of the United States, who is fighting cancer, was third and this year's Tour de France winner, the Dane Bjarne Riis, fourth.

Gibbs comeback

Rugby union: Andrew Gibbs launches his international comeback when he packs down at blind-side flanker for Emerging Wales against the USA Eagles at Rodney Parade, Newport, on January 1. Gibbs returned from the summer tour to Australia as first-choice No 6 but has been ill this season. Nigel Davies leads a side that has nine other full internationals.

McCracken hope

Boxing: Robert McCracken, the unbeaten Commonwealth middleweight champion, has had a career-saving back operation. He has been told to rest for at least six weeks.

SWIMMING: IRELAND'S TRIPLE CHAMPION INTENDS TO EXPAND REPERTOIRE

Smith sets sights on switch for Sydney

Smith on her way to a second place in Bordeaux

MICHELLE SMITH, the triple Olympic gold medal-winner from Ireland, has had mixed fortunes with a win and a defeat at a meeting in Bordeaux this week, but she still said that she plans to expand her repertoire for the Sydney Games in 2000.

Smith won the 50 metres freestyle final at the Bordeaux grand prix meeting on Monday in her first outing since she won the three titles at the Atlanta Games in August, but on Tuesday failed in the 200 metres individual medley, finishing three seconds adrift of Martina Moravcova, the European champion, from Slovakia.

Smith said that her dream was to compete in Sydney in different disciplines from those in which she won three golds and one bronze at Atlanta. "My objective is to return to my top form to take part in the world championships in the spring, but my real goal is the Olympic Games in Sydney," Smith, 26, said. "I'd like to change distances, explore other sensations. I'm going to give it a go anyway.

"The Olympics is the greatest. I've taken up my training again and that's my life. I'll need another three to four months to be at my best, but it's really tough returning to the pool."

Smith is flying to the island of Réunion for her next meeting.

Results, page 26

TENNIS

Injured Seles still set on Melbourne

By Our Sports Staff

MONICA SELES, four times the Australian Open champion, still expects to defend her title next month, even though a broken finger has forced her to pull out of an earlier event in Sydney.

Seles informed organisers of the Sydney International tournament, scheduled for January 5 to 11, that she would be withdrawing from the traditional warm-up for the opening grand slam championship of the year in Melbourne, which starts on January 13.

Barry Masters, the director of the Sydney event, said: "It is never easy to lose your defending champion, especially someone like Monica, who is so incredibly popular."

Seles, a left-hander, injured a finger on her right hand late last month, but did not have it treated immediately. The break was diagnosed 12 days ago and she has since trained with the finger in a splint.

The setback continues a run of injuries for Seles, 23, since her comeback to tennis from a court-side stabbing, in Hamburg in April 1993, that kept her out of the game for 27 months.

Seles has yet to be beaten in the Australian Open in four visits to Melbourne and regards it as one of her favourite tournaments. Should she withdraw, it would be a severe blow for organisers, who are anticipating a head-to-head contest with Steffi Graf, the world No 1, whose opening Australian engagement is in the Hopman Cup mixed team event in Perth, starting on Sunday.

Anna Kournikova, 15, of Russia, has also withdrawn from the Sydney tournament, but is still entered for the Australian Open. Arantxa Sánchez Vicario, of Spain, and Martina Hingis, of Switzerland, head the field for the women's singles in Sydney, which will also be contested by Lindsay Davenport, Chanda Rubin and Jennifer Capriati, of the United States, and Mary Pierce, of France.

SNOW REPORTS

	Depth (cm) L	Depth (cm) U	Conditions Piste	Conditions Off/p	Runs to resort	Weather (5pm)	°C	Last snow
ANDORRA								
Soldeu	15	140	fair	varied	fair	cloud	-3	22/12
(Excellent piste conditions; wind-blown off piste)								
AUSTRIA								
Kitzbuhel	5	45	fair	poor	fair	cloud	2	20/12
(Most upper runs OK; much-needed snow expected today)								
Obergurgl	40	140	good	varied	good	cloud	2	23/12
(Fresh powder on firm base; more snow forecast)								
Soll	15	60	fair	varied	poor	cloud	3	14/12
(Reasonable piste skiing though odd bare patch)								
St Anton	45	190	good	varied	fair	rain	3	23/12
(Great skiing on fresh snow above 1,600 metres)								
FRANCE								
Alpe d'Huez	80	180	good	heavy	good	cloud	5	19/12
(Some low runs slushy, otherwise great skiing)								
Meribel	100	160	good	varied	fair	cloud	8	20/12
(Slight thaw below 2,000 metres; upper runs remain good)								
La Plagne	100	200	good	fair	open	snow	4	23/12
(Flattering powder on upper runs, heavier lower down)								
Flaine	80	230	fair	heavy	heavy	cloud	3	23/12
(Fresh dusting above 2,000 metres though wet lower down)								
S Chevalier	80	210	good	heavy	fair	snow	5	23/12
(Superb skiing on upper levels after fresh powder)								
Val Thorens	160	240	good	crust	good	cloud	1	19/12
(Best piste skiing above 2,200 metres, icier below)								
ITALY								
Cervinia	110	240	good	varied	good	cloud	2	23/12
(Excellent piste skiing after snowfall)								
Livigno	70	230	good	varied	good	cloud	-1	23/12
(Good piste skiing throughout resort)								
SWITZERLAND								
Mürren	70	170	good	varied	fair	fair	1	21/12
(Well-groomed pistes at all levels)								
Verbier	60	230	good	fair	soft	cloud	0	23/12
(Excellent piste skiing despite flat light)								
Wengen	35	100	good	heavy	fair	cloud	5	14/12
(Despite milder temperatures, good skiing continues)								

Source: Ski Club of Great Britain L - lower slopes; U - upper.

RACING: THE GREY MONK AIMS TO RESUME WINNING WAYS IN VALUABLE WETHERBY CHASE

MARKET RASEN

THUNDERER

12.30 Henrietta Howard. 1.00 Minster's Madam. 1.35 Out Ranking. 2.05 Diamond Fort. 2.35 Random Harvest. 3.05 Cast Of Thousands. 3.35 Brambles Way.

Our Newmarket Correspondent: 12.30 Henrietta Howard.

GOING: GOOD (8.30AM INSPECTION)

12.30 EBF TATTERSALLS (IRELAND) MARES ONLY NOVICES CHASE

(Qualifier £3,743: 2m 1f 110yd) (5 runners)

1 050- CALL ME BLACK 508 M Hammond 7-10-12 —
2 2-32 CHORUS LINE 55 (G) P Beaumont 7-10-12 B Grattan (7)
3 5-14 HENRIETTA HOWARD 21 (BF,F,G,S) Mrs D Haine 6-10-12 —
4 P04- OLD BETSY 236 Mrs S Smith 6-10-12 —
5 U3-P PRIMITIVE PENNY 30 (G) Mrs D Haine 5-10-12 —

4-6 Henrietta Howard, 4-1 Chorus Line, 5-1 Call Me Black, 2-1 Old Betsy, 25-1 Primitive Penny.

1.00 JACK AND GLADYS COOK GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY HURDLE

(Selling handicap: £2,100: 2m 1f 110yd) (12)

1 4173 MINSTER'S MADAM 17 (V,D,S) J Neville 5-12-0 J A McCarthy
2 /4-P TREAD THE BOARDS 19 (BF) M Pipe 5-11-10 B Moore (7)
3 5244 SEA GOD 61 M Chapman 5-11-8 W Worthington
4 U00- DUGORT STRAND 306 D Brennan 5-11-2 M Brennan
5 1 TOULSTON LADY 13 (F) J Wharton 4-11-1 P Niven
6 00-2 WEATHER ALERT 20 (CD,G) K Morgan 5-11-0 A S Smith
7 -04P SHARMOOR 7 Miss L Siddall 4-10-13 F Leahy (3)
8 P0-P BRITANNIA MILLS 17 (D,F) M Chapman 5-10-11 Ross Berry (7)
9 6403 OAKBURY 13 Miss L Siddall 4-10-7 D Byrne
10 30-5 BOLD TOP 13 (V) B Rothwell 4-10-6 B Grattan (7)
11 0P6 DARING RYDE 20 J Smith 5-10-0 V Smith
12 CPP0 WOODLANDS ENERGY 6 P Pritchard 5-10-0 R Bellamy

4-1 Minster's Madam, 9-2 Sea God, 5-1 Tread The Boards, 11-2 Toulston Lady, 6-1 Weather Alert, 8-1 Dugort Strand, 10-1 Sharmoor, 12-1 others.

1.35 ROSELAND GROUP KILVINGTON HANDICAP HURDLE

(£4,835: 2m 3f 110yd) (15 runners)

1 6621 JUNGLE KNIFE 1105F (S) K Morgan 10-12-0 J A McCarthy
2 2411 OUT RANKING 14 (D,F,G,S) M Pipe 4-11-12 B Moore (7)
3 /0-5 GLANMERIN 16 (G,S) K Morgan 5-11-10 A S Smith
4 3-02 KIPPANOUR 13 (B,G) C Mann 4-11-6 J Magee (3)
5 3232 LORD MCMURROUGH 10 (D,S) J Neville 6-11-4 M Brennan
6 -112 ROSENCRANTZ 28 (BF,F) Mrs V Williams 4-11-2 P Niven
7 3/06 DUAL IMAGE 10 (F,G,S) J Fitzgerald 9-11-0 2nd pref
8 440- CAN CAN CHARLIE 6F (C,F,G) J Pearce 6-10-12 V Smith
9 -442 HALITSA 22 (G) M Hammond 4-10-12 2nd pref
10 P5-P STAR OF DAVID 30 (CD,F,G) Miss A Embiricos 8-10-11 J Ryan
11 6-3F SUDDEN SPIN 8 (BF,G,S) J Norton 6-10-8 B Grattan (7)
12 U6-P MANOLETE 24 (G,S) Mrs M Jones 5-10-7 D Byrne
13 66P- MAJOR YAASI 625 (G) J Glover 6-10-1 R Marley
14 3-15 YOUNG RADICAL 58 (F) J Upson 4-10-0 D Morris
15 04-0 TRISTAN'S COMET 200 (C,G,S) J L Harris 9-10-0 2nd pref

2-1 Out Ranking, 7-2 Kippanour, 5-1 Rosencrantz, 8-1 Lord McMurrough, 10-1 Can Can Charlie, 12-1 Sudden Spin, Glanmerin, 14-1 Jungle Knife, Young Radical, Manolete, 16-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: C Mann, 4 winners from 9 runners, 44.4%; K Bailey, 12 from 46, 26.1%; Mrs M Reveley, 21 from 83, 25.3%; J Pearce, 4 from 16, 25.0%; M Pipe, 11 from 52, 21.2%; J Upson, 4 from 21, 19.0%; P Beaumont, 8 from 48, 16.7%; Miss A Embiricos, 3 from 18, 16.7%; K Morgan, 16 from 99, 16.2%.

JOCKEYS: P Niven, 20 winners from 111 rides, 18.0%; D Byrne, 9 from 61, 14.8%; A S Smith, 17 from 125, 14.4%; F Leahy, 6 from 43, 14.0%; J Ryan, 7 from 52, 13.5%; R Marley, 4 from 33, 12.1%; R Garritty, 11 from 94, 11.7%.

2.05 CLUGSTON GROUP LINCOLNSHIRE NATIONAL

(Handicap chase: £10,699: 4m 1f) (13)

1 0-2P UBU VAL 19 (BF,F,G,S) M Bethell 10-11-7 A S Smith
2 F-51 SEVEN TOWERS 34 (G,S) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-4 P Niven
3 5-P4 URANUS COLLONGES 5 (G,S) J Fitzgerald 10-11-3 M Brennan
4 1PP- DON'T LIGHT UP 247 (V,G,S) Miss V Williams 10-11-0 D Byrne
5 1-16 ANDRE LAVAL 30 (G,S) K Bailey 11-11-0 J A McCarthy
6 -452 DIAMOND FORT 5 (CD,F,G,S) J McConnochie 11-10-10 D J Moffatt
7 -134 CHANGE THE REIGN 56 (C,F,G,S) Miss A Embiricos 9-10-2 J Ryan
8 54U5 PIMS GUNNER 7 (F,G,S) M Hammond 8-10-8 R Garritty
9 2U11 MY HOUSE 20 (C,G,S) J J O'Neill 8-10-7 R McGrath (3)
10 1P22 CHURCH LAW 14 (S) Mrs L Taylor 9-10-6 D C O'Connor
11 P-12 WOODLANDS BOY 20 (F,S) P Curtis 8-10-3 F Leahy (3)
12 PP52 BARNTOWN BILL 9 (V,C,F,G,S) M Pipe 7-10-0 Guy Lewis (3)
13 6004 WOODLANDS GENHIRE 14 (B,F) P Pritchard 11-10-0 R Bellamy

3-1 Seven Towers, 7-2 My House, 5-1 Ubu Val, 6-1 Church Law, 7-1 Andre Laval, 8-1 Diamond Fort, 12-1 others.

2.35 BRUCE AND JOE CARR MEMORIAL TROPHY NOVICES HANDICAP CHASE

(£4,016: 3m 1f) (17)

1 6-24 RANDOM HARVEST 34 (BF) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-10 P Niven
2 2-43 PEARL'S CHOICE 10 J McConnochie 8-11-4 D J Moffatt
3 0/04 MAYEE O'GRADY 23 (G,S) W Cunningham 7-11-2 N Smith
4 66-1 MAJORITY MAJOR 23 (G,S) P Cheesbrough 7-11-1 A S Smith
5 3-10 BASSENHALLY 30 (G) Mrs P Sly 6-11-0 R Marley
6 -2U4 LOCH GARMAN HOTEL 15 P Dalton 7-10-12 S Bellamy
7 P-2F MAMICA 15 M Dods 6-10-11 M Brennan
8 6-36 KINGS SERMON 15 P Beaumont 7-10-9 2nd pref
9 3-F1 MISTER TRICK 16 (G) L Lungo 6-10-9 J A McCarthy
10 1-F4 MONKSAAN 24 (G) M Hammond 7-10-8 R Garritty
11 3FP ROYAL PARIS 16 Mrs S Smith 8-10-6 —
12 3P-4 RIVER RED 35 (F) K Frost 10-10-5 Guy Lewis (3)
13 /2-4 I'M IN CLOVER 414 J Norton 7-10-2 Miss V Haigh
14 00-5 NOOSA SOUND 15 L Lungo 6-10-2 D Byrne
15 0-55 TARGET LINE 15 (S) Mrs S Smith 6-10-2 R Wilkinson (7)
16 /34- LORD VICK 394 (B) Miss A Embiricos 7-10-0 J Ryan
17 4623 RECORD LOVER 17 (F) M Chapman 6-10-0 W Worthington

7-2 Random Harvest, 9-2 Majority Major, 11-2 Mister Trick, 8-1 Royal Paris, Bassenhally, 10-1 Mamica, Monksaan, 12-1 others.

3.05 SANDILANDS GOLFING HOLIDAYS MAIDEN HURDLE

(£2,758: 2m 3f 110yd) (16)

1 P- ACERBUS DULCIS 23F M Chapman 5-11-5 W Worthington
2 00-3 APRIL SEVENTH 37 J Neville 5-11-5 J Ryan
3 201- BURN OUT 246 (G) J Pearce 4-11-5 V Smith
4 32-0 CAST OF THOUSANDS 24 C Egerton 5-11-5 J A McCarthy
5 5-24 DENHAM HILL 24 C Mann 5-11-5 J Magee (3)
6 4 EARLY PEACE 61 M Dods 4-11-5 Guy Lewis (3)
7 FAYETTE COUNTY J J O'Neill 5-11-5 R McGrath (3)
8 -235 GOLF LAND 41 (BF) L Lungo 4-11-5 P Niven
9 052- MOKCATOR 278 J Gorst 4-11-5 D Byrne
10 00-4 JAYFCEE 19 M Easterby 4-11-5 R Bellamy
11 0/2 MALTA MAN 24 P Cheesbrough 6-11-5 A S Smith
12 31-0 NORTHERN STAR 19 (F) J Pickering 5-11-5 Miss J Wormall (7)
13 0 REACH THE CLOUDS 29 J Upson 4-11-5 D Morris
14 02- SHAAGNI ANA 621 J Smyth-Osbourne 5-11-5 F Leahy (3)
15 02 SHARED RISK 49 J Norton 4-11-5 B Grattan (7)
16 -604 DARK PHOENIX 20 (G) C Brennan 6-11-0 M Brennan

9-2 Malta Man, 5-1 Burn Out, 6-1 Fayette County, Denham Hill, 9-1 Cast Of Thousands, April Seventh, 10-1 Shared Risk, Mokcator, 12-1 others.

3.35 CHRISTMAS SPIRIT NOVICES CLAIMING HURDLE

(£1,940: 2m 1f 110yd) (14)

1 5-11 BRAMBLES WAY 23F (B,D,F,G) Mrs M Reveley 7-11-6 P Niven
2 FIRST GOLD 23F J Wharton 7-11-2 V Smith
3 UNCHANATERSCLEAGHA 34F M Bailey 4-11-0 J A McCarthy
4 7421 GLENVALLY 20 (C,G) B Murray 5-10-12 2nd pref
5 4P64 ATH CHEANNAITHE 22 (D,F) J Neville 4-10-11 R Marley
6 00 MUDLARK 13 (BF) J Norton 4-10-11 D Byrne
7 0P35 PAST MASTER 8 S Gollings 8-10-11 J Magee (3)
8 SPANISH STRIPPER 32F M Chapman 5-10-11 W Worthington
9 0 TAJAR 15 M Dods 4-10-11 Guy Lewis (3)
10 -PPP WOODLANDS LAD TOO 6 P Pritchard 4-10-11 R Bellamy
11 43-5 GAME DRIVE 29 K Morgan 4-10-8 A S Smith
12 6-30 AUNTIE ALICE 19 J Fitzgerald 6-10-8 F Leahy (3)
13 GARLANDHAYES 205F Miss A George 4-10-5 —
14 00 SMALL FLAME 33 C Brennan 5-10-5 M Brennan

5-4 Brambles Way, 7-2 Ath Cheannaithe, 5-1 Game Drive, 8-1 Auntie Alice, 10-1 Past Master, 12-1 First Gold, 14-1 others.

WETHERBY

THUNDERER

12.45 Dana Point. 1.15 Golden Hello. 1.45 Circus Line. 2.15 The Grey Monk. 2.45 Cumbrian Challenge. 3.15 The Captain's Wish.

GOING: GOOD TO SOFT SIS

12.45 CHRISTMAS NOVICES HURDLE

(£2,952: 2m) (7 runners)

1 15 ADVANCE EAST 12 (D,G) M Dods 4-11-4 A Dobbin
2 21 DANA POINT 24 (D,S) Mrs S Smith 4-11-4 R Guest
3 2535 [illegible] P Carberry
4 0 BOLLIN FRANK 44 T Easterby 4-10-12 R Garritty
5 50 MENALDI 26 P Cheesbrough 5-10-12 N Leach
6 11- NORDIC PRINCE 400 (F,G) T Tate 5-10-12 J F Titley
7 10-5 SOUTHERN CROSS 23 (S) M W Easterby 4-10-12 R Johnson

7-4 Dana Point, 2-1 Advance East, 5-1 Bollin Frank, 5-1 Nordic Prince, 7-1 [illegible], 8-1 Southern Cross, 16-1 Menaldi.

1.15 BOROUGHBRIDGE NOVICES CHASE

(£4,471: 2m) (5)

1 F1U1 GOLDEN HELLO 12 (CD,F,G,S) T Easterby 5-11-12 A Dobbin
2 11 DARING PAST 19 (CD,F,G,S) M Hammond 6-11-9 R Garritty
3 56F5 ETHICAL NOTE 22 Mrs S Smith 5-11-4 Mr P Murray
4 [illegible] MASTER NOVA 1022 (S) M Camacho 7-11-4 R Guest
5 2-32 [illegible] 2nd pref

11-10 Golden Hello, 11-8 Daring Past, 6-1 Master Nova, 16-1 Ethical Note.

1.45 ST JOHN AMBULANCE HANDICAP HURDLE

(£3,215: 2m) (7)

1 226- DISCO DES MOTTES 582 (S) G Richards 5-12-0 P Carberry
2 333- [illegible] J J Fitzgerald 6-11-11 J F Titley
3 4505 THORNTON GATE 12 (CD,BF,F,G,S) T Easterby 7-11-6 R Garritty
4 5-00 ELATION 9 (C,F,S) G Richards 4-11-0 A Dobbin
5 15- CELESTIAL CHOIR 47F (D,G) J L Eyre 6-10-9 R Guest
6 -211 CIRCUS LINE 12 (D,G,S) M W Easterby 5-10-6 R Johnson
7 -442 [illegible] 22 (S) M Hammond 4-10-0 D Bentley

7-4 Circus Line, [illegible] Celestial Choir, 6-1 [illegible], 6-1 Thornton Gate, [illegible]

2.15 BOWLAND MEYRICK HANDICAP CHASE

(£16,938: 3m 1f) (6)

1 24-2 JODAMI 40 (F,G,S) P Beaumont 11-11-10 J F Titley
2 -443 SCOTTON BANKS 12 (C,D,BF,G,S) T Easterby 7-11-1 R Garritty
3 14-3 LO STREGONE 26 (C,D,F,G,S) T Tate 10-10-12 Mr S Swiers
4 1-12 THE GREY MONK 26 (D,BF,G,S) G Richards 8-10-8 A Dobbin
5 22-1 CALL IT A DAY 47 (F,G,S) D Nicholson 6-10-0 R Johnson
6 125- AVRO ANSON 257 (F,G) M Camacho 8-10-0 R Guest

7-4 The Grey Monk, 7-2 Call It A Day, 4-1 Jodami, 5-1 Lo Stregone, 8-1 Avro Anson, 10-1 Scotton Banks.

2.45 SUPERMASTER HANDICAP CHASE

(£6,684: 2m 4f 110yd) (4)

1 -204 EASTHORPE 14 (F,G,S) Miss H Knight 8-11-10 J F Titley
2 U3/ GENERAL PERSHING 615 (CD,F,G,S) D Nicholson 10-11-7 R Johnson
3 6-11 EASBY JOKER 26 (CD,F,G,S) S Kettlewell 8-11-1 A Dobbin
4 5021 CUMBRIAN CHALLENGE 13 (CD,F,G,S) T Easterby 7-11-0 R Garritty

6-4 Easby Joker, 7-4 Cumbrian Challenge, 4-1 Easthorpe, 6-1 General Pershing.

3.15 BOXING DAY NOVICES HANDICAP HURDLE

(£3,007: 2m 4f 110yd) (11)

1 -422 THE CAPTAIN'S WISH 10 (G) D Nicholson 5-12-0 R Johnson
2 P02- TORCH VERT 47F N Walker 4-10-12 D Bentley
3 36-6 PILKINGTON 19 (G) J Howard Johnson 6-10-8 J F Titley
4 -444 SILLY MONEY 44 T Easterby 5-10-7 R Garritty
5 25-6 BEAU MATELOT 75 Miss M Milligan 4-10-5 M Newton
6 4-F3 DONT FORGET CURTIS 19 G Moore 4-10-4 N Hannity (7)
7 0514 LIFEBUOY 29 (D,BF,G) J Turner 5-10-3 A Dobbin
8 -066 REFLEX HAMMER 19 J Upson 5-10-0 R Guest
9 445F HOTSPUR STREET 5 (B) M W Easterby 4-10-0 P Carberry
10 0-00 SKI PATH 6 N Bycroft 7-10-0 2nd pref
11 0-00 THE OTHER MAN 19 Miss L Siddall 6-10-0 D Pears

3-4 The Captain's Wish, 5-1 Reflex Hammer, 6-1 Torch Vert, 7-1 Dont Forget Curtis, 8-1 Pilkington, Silly Money, Hotspur Street, 12-1 others.

COURSE SPECIALISTS

TRAINERS: D Nicholson, 17 winners from 52 runners, 32.7%; G Richards, 27 from 113, 23.9%; T Easterby, 7 from 34, 20.6%; J Johnson, 14 from 78, 17.9%; J Fitzgerald, 15 from 99, 15.2%; P Beaumont, 6 from 43, 12.5%.

JOCKEYS: P Carberry, 5 winners from 18 rides, 27.8%; R Johnson, 5 from 20, 25.0%; R Guest, 12 from 69, 17.4%; A Dobbin, 15 from 96, 15.6%. Only qualifiers

Danoli returns to action

DANOLI, Ireland's favourite horse, attempts to get his steeplechasing career back on course in the grade one Dennys Gold Medal Chase over an extended two miles at Leopardstown this afternoon (Our Irish Racing Correspondent writes).

Danoli fell at the third on his previous outing, the Drinmore Chase at Fairyhouse on December 1, but his trainer, Tom Foley, is confident that he has his stable star in the right frame of mind.

"As far as I am concerned the most important thing is that Danoli jumps well," he said. "If we get beaten, even beaten a long way, and he jumps well I'll be happy enough.

"We've got plenty of schooling into him since he fell at Fairyhouse and he jumped well when we took him to Gowran Park on Friday. He's well in himself."

Danoli will face eight rivals, including the Arthur Moore-trained Jeffell, unbeaten in his last two outings, and the English challenger Land Afar, trained by Paul Webber.

At same venue tomorrow, Moore's Queen Mother Champion Chase winner, Klairon Davis, tackles 11 rivals, including the Jim Dreaper-trained Merry Gale, in the McCain Handicap Chase.

Doran's Pride appears in the William Neville Novices' Chase over three miles on Saturday. He impressed when beating See More Business, trained by Paul Nicholls, to win the Drinmore Chase at Fairyhouse, the race in which Danoli fell.

CRICKET

Australia in mood to complete rapid series victory

FROM MICHAEL HENDERSON IN MELBOURNE

THE traditional Christmas Test here has assumed an overwhelming significance for the beleaguered West Indies cricketers. Australia, 2-0 up after the first two Tests of a five-match series, need only a draw to retain the Sir Frank Worrell Trophy and underline their status as the strongest team in the world. Another defeat for West Indies will lead to a thorough shake-up of their cricket and cricketers.

Courtney Walsh, whose captaincy can only be an interregnum between the departure of Richie Richardson and the likely investiture of Brian Lara, has reminded the players of their responsibilities, but this is no longer a team that terrifies opponents, certainly not ones wearing baggy green caps. Australia won the opening matches by the little matter of 123 runs and 124 runs, and are looking forward to a third successive victory on a ground where they have won six of their past seven Tests.

So desperately have West Indies played on this tour that there was wild — and, as it transpired, unsupported — talk of asking Junior Murray, the wicketkeeper in the one-day team, to open the innings with Sherwin Campbell, who lacks a regular partner. That really would have been an admission of defeat.

It is, however, defeat that Walsh and his players are finding familiar, more so than any West Indies side since the one led by Clive Lloyd was hammered 5-1 by Ian Chappell's Australia in 1975-76. Success has led to atrophy and there is now open acknowledgement that the players are not up to the task of reviving West Indian cricket. Some of them are playing for their futures, although, in their bedraggled state at present, even that may not be enough to stir a healthy response.

Australia, somewhat oddly for a team that has become so dominant, have problems of their own. By dropping Ricky Ponting, the Tasmania batsman, and Mike Kasprowicz, the Queensland new-ball bowler, they have identified two areas of concern that they hope to rectify in the short term. In the longer term, Ponting, as a player of true quality, will come again; of Kasprowicz, nobody can be certain.

There is no quibbling with the omissions. Ponting has passed 15 only once in six innings at No 3 and Kasprowicz failed to take a wicket in either Test. Jason Gillespie, the left-arm bowler from South Australia, retains his place and the selectors have summoned two left-handers, Matthew Hayden and Justin Langer, to bolster the batting.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (from): M A Taylor (captain), M L Hayden, J L Langer, M E Waugh, S R Waugh, G S Blewett, M G Bevan, I A Healy, P R Reiffel, S K Warne, J N Gillespie, G D McGrath.

WEST INDIES (from): C A Walsh (captain), S L Campbell, R G Samuels, S Chanderpaul, B C Lara, C L Hooper, J C Adams, J R Murray, I R Bishop, C E L Ambrose, K C G Benjamin, N A M McLean.

Hayden, 25, the Queensland opener, made a stack of runs in England in 1993, but, with the emergence of Michael Slater, he seemed destined to live his career in the shadows. Now that Slater has lost form so completely, and Matthew Elliott injured himself during the Sydney Test, Hayden has the chance to make a case for himself as Mark Taylor's partner. In his previous Test, in Johannesburg two years ago, he was thrown into the fray at 20 minutes' notice.

At 26, and with six Tests behind him, Langer is a veteran by comparison. He struggled against West Indies four years ago and appeared to be another batsman whose time had come and gone. Now, after making 598 runs in four first-class matches this summer, including an unbeaten 274 against South Australia last week, the Western Australian finds himself back in the party and, very likely, in the team. Michael Bevan, whose bowling has proved more effective in this series than his batting, is expected to stand down when the team is finalised.

An Englishman looking at the riches of Australian cricket can only wonder about Slater's absence. England would give their eye teeth to have a man as gifted. For that matter there is no Stuart Law, who dazzled for Essex last season, either. Instead, he captains Australia A in a one-day match against Pakistan in Sydney, but he must, one feels, play some part for the senior team before long.

If the year coming up is critical for West Indies, it is also important for Australia, who go to South Africa in March for three Tests (and, the commercial tail wagging the dog, seven one-day matches), and then go to England in May for six Tests, which is itself one Test too many. There will be some foot-weary cricketers by the time that jaunt is through, and Australia will have need of as many able-bodied and talented players as they can muster. Fortunately for them, they can muster quite a few.

Should they win the toss, Australia could easily bat West Indies out of the game on the first day. On the other hand, Lara owes his team runs, and Ambrose may find some reserves of pace or bloody-mindedness from somewhere. Realistically, though, the balance of skill, will and expectation favours Australia.

ADRIAN MURRELL / ALLSPORT

Hayden has emerged from Slater's shadows to press his claims with Australia

Blind cricketers face change

BY BILL FRINDALL

BLIND cricketers in Great Britain must learn to play a vastly different game if they are to compete internationally. That was the stark message emanating from the inaugural international conference on cricket for the blind, held in Delhi.

This historic meeting was organised by George Abrahams, of India, who, having created impressive media and sponsorship backing for blind cricket in his own country, turned his attention to the international arena some three years ago.

He found a sponsor for an international tournament, but his plans were thwarted by the fact that, although cricket has been an established sport for the blind and partially-sighted in Britain and Australia since the 1950s, the equipment and laws differ vastly between the countries.

To realise Abrahams's vision of a World Cup competition, a compromise had to be found between the British game (with its soccer ball housing ball-bearings, overarm bowling, catching permitted as a dismissal, enlarged wickets, eight-ball overs, 18-yard grass pitches and 35-yard boundaries) and the antipodean version (small wire-mesh ball encasing bottle caps, underarm bowling, no catching, standard stumps, six-ball overs, 22-yard concrete pitches and 45-yard boundaries).

Surprisingly, in a conference lasting only two days, delegates from seven countries — the Test-playing nations minus West Indies and Zimbabwe — agreed a form of cricket acceptable to all concerned. They settled for a white, hard plastic ball similar in size to a standard cricket ball but housing beads, underarm bowling, catching, standard sized stumps, six-ball overs, a 22-yard grass pitch and a 45-yard boundary.

It is a compromise in which the best features of each version have been retained, but each nation will now have to learn a form of the game different from the one with which they grew up.

India settle on one spinner for first Test in Durban

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

INDIA resisted the temptation to play two spinners in their side for the opening Test match against South Africa when they announced a 12-man squad yesterday. Anil Kumble, the leg spinner, recently recovered from split webbing in his right hand, was an automatic selection as India's premier strike bowler, along with Javagal Srinath, the pace bowler.

However, Venkatapathy Raju, the left-arm spinner, tipped by some as a likely inclusion for the Durban Test because of South Africa's occasional struggles against the turning ball in India, has been omitted. Instead, India's attack will be led by the seamers, Srinath, Venkatesh Prasad and David Johnson, with the threat of Kumble, a world-class wrist spinner, kept as a probable trump card. Sachin Tendulkar, the captain, and Saurav Ganguly provide the back-up seam, while Woorkeri Raman, the opening batsman, may be employed with his occasional slow left-arm. V. V. S. Laxman, an additional batsman, is expected to be named as twelfth man.

India finished their preparations for the first of the three-Test series against South Africa with a workout at Kingsmead yesterday. Tendulkar, in confident mood after his side's recent 2-1 series victory at home, said that his team was looking to keep the momentum going.

"We want to maintain the positive outlook which we had in India — where all three Tests finished with results," Tendulkar said. "It will be imperative here in South Africa that our batsmen hit the loose ball whenever possible — and a positive outlook will help with this."

South Africa, who also completed their last-minute preparation with three hours of nets and fielding practice yesterday, will name their Test side from a 13-man squad today. However, Allan Donald, the pace bowler, and Shaun Pollock are available again after recovering from ankle injuries.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): W J Cronje (captain), G Kirsten, A C Hudson, A M Bacher, H H Gibbs, D J Cullinan, J H Kallis, B M McMillan, S M Pollock, L Klusener, D J Richardson, A A Donald, P R Adams.

INDIA: S R Tendulkar (captain), V Rathore, W V Raman, S Ganguly, R S Dravid, M Azharuddin, N R Mongia, A Kumble, J Srinath, D Johnson, V Prasad, V V S Laxman

RUGBY LEAGUE

Murdock hoping to make early impression

BY OUR SPORTS STAFF

CRAIG MURDOCK is hoping that his performance for Wigan against St Helens, the Super League champions, this afternoon will help to earn him a regular first-team place next season. Murdock, 23, kept Shaun Edwards, the Great Britain scrum half, out of the team for a short time last season and, with Edwards still recovering after a knee operation, Murdock is determined to make an early impression on Graeme West, the Wigan coach.

"It's my chance to stake first claim for the scrum-half jersey," Murdock said. "I'm after Shaun's shirt and I don't want to waste the opportunity. I kept him on the bench for three games last season and that's my target again."

Wigan will be without all four of their players loaned to rugby union clubs during the autumn for the challenge match this afternoon. The absence of Henry Paul and Jason Robinson, who are at Bath, Va'aiga Tuigamala (Wasps) and Gary Connolly (Harlequins) is a considerable blow given that Terry O'Connor, Simon Haughton, Mick Cassidy and Edwards are all out injured. In addition, Andy Farrell, the Great Britain captain, faces a late check on a groin injury.

"At least it gives us the opportunity to see how our youngsters perform against a class side like Saints," West said. "We will also be starting with our three new signings, Dave Murray, Ian Sherratt and Stephen Holgate, and that's a big plus.

"We have trained well and are determined to put up a good show. Saints derbies are always fiercely fought and we are hopeful of a crowd of more than 10,000."

St Helens give debuts to Julian O'Neill and Alan Cross, but are missing Chris Joynt, Joey Hayes, Andy Haigh, Keiron Cunningham, Andy Leathem and Tommy Martyn. Rugby league's two leading sides meet in a return challenge at Knowsley Road on New Year's Day.

Leeds and Halifax contest a West Yorkshire derby at Headingley today, while Huddersfield and Keighley meet at the McAlpine Stadium.

☐ Phil Larder, the Sheffield Eagles coach, has signed Whetu Taewa, 25, from North Queensland Cowboys.

SPORT LETTERS

No 10 holds rugby union's key

From Mr Raymund Carroll

Sir, If Scotland could be persuaded to look at a rearrangement of its rugby union team by selecting Gregor Townsend at No 10, such a choice could develop into the jewel in the crown of the upcoming five nations' championship.

By providing a cutting edge while exhibiting ball-carrying skills, Townsend is arguably the only playmaker in the northern hemisphere who also kicks cunningly, tackles to completion and has the capacity to direct the traffic from the pivotal position.

In the 50 championships since the war, the countries which have won grand slams, championships and triple crowns have nearly all been blessed with peerless No 10s: Kyle, Morgan, Regan, Sharp, Albaladejo, Watkins, Gachassin, John, Bennett, Campbell, Rutherford, Mesnel, J. Davies, Chalmers and Andrew. These 15 players significantly contributed to 36 title-winning teams and won more than 500 caps themselves — no mean achievements.

Understandably, these half backs were not all in the same mould, having emanated from different kinds of pods and factories and, while some contributed with sleight of hand and deft footwork, others relied more on one, or even, *mirabile dictu*, both boots.

I have been privileged to witness all of them play international rugby and it is fair to say that they entertained joyously, played mainly with distinction and became role models for younger generations developing their rugby skills.

Could it happen in 1997 that the team with the best No 10 could nudge itself to the top of the European tree now that the other four nations have recently declared themselves, albeit inadvertently, effectively "tenless"?

Perhaps the advent of a professional era will permit history, from an amateur aeon, to repeat itself? If so, maybe the southern hemisphere could be surreptitiously persuaded to look up — even so much as a little.

Yours faithfully,
RAYMUND CARROLL,
The Beeches,
Mill Lane,
Cheadle, Cheshire.

Key difference

From Mr Edward Grayson

Sir, Gerald Davies (Rugby Commentary, December 20) was understandably apprehensive about the continuing participation of rugby union referees following the Court of Appeal's affirmation of Mr Justice Curtis's negligence judgment in the case of Smoldon v Whitworth and Nolan.

Davies's apprehension was partially alleviated by Andrew Longmore's report (December 23) from Haywards Heath. The awareness of referee David Beglan and the Sussex Referees Society secretary, Peter Athis, that it occurred "in a colts match, which is very different", was at the heart of each court's conclusions, but overlooked by Davies.

The *Times* law report (December 18) emphasised how the scrummaging laws had been changed, requiring the strict observance of the crouch-touch-pause-engage (CTPE) sequence for the 1991-92 season "specifically to protect young players against the risk of spinal injury caused by collapsed scrums".

It was the failure to enforce what the trial judge had called "this preventive mantle", with other warning signs pointing to the foreseeable risk of injury, which led to the inevitable and virtually unappealable conclusion of negligence.

Furthermore Davies's concern also led him to echo a more popular and general fallacy when he wrote: "This represents an example of the problems that lie ahead for a sport which was designed to be amateur and is no more."

This ignores the two-dimensional gap which now exists globally for all sport between the showbiz/entertainment levels and the grass roots (including schools and colts), which will always remain amateur. The rugby union laws recognised this in 1991. To ignore them produces last week's legal liability and the horrendous fate for Ben Smoldon.

Yours faithfully,
EDWARD GRAYSON,
9-12 Bell Yard, WC2.

Sports Letters may be sent by fax to 0171-782 5211. They should include a daytime telephone number.

Marathon entry not unfair

From the Chief Executive of the London Marathon

Sir, Mr Stan Weber (Sports Letters, December 20) completely misunderstands the London Marathon entry system and his central complaint is that he, at the age of 78, was rejected.

The success of the event means that we have many more applicants than spaces and, no matter how fair the system, more than 36,000 had to be rejected and many are naturally disappointed. However, Mr Weber's assertion that male veterans are disadvantaged by the system does not bear scrutiny. In the 1996 race there were 30 women over the age of 65 but 356 men in the same category. We cannot see how men have been discriminated against in practice.

As to places for charities, we are proud of the fact that last year our runners between them raised more than £10 million for various good causes. We reserve less than 10 per cent of entries for charities but more than 64 per cent, in fact, decided to run for charity.

Charities no doubt think more places should be reserved for them and Mr Weber thinks more should be given to older men. Every person rejected thinks their category should receive special treatment.

Let us stop the carping and instead celebrate the fact that Britain has the world's most successful and popular marathon.

Yours sincerely,
NICK BITEL,
Chief Executive,
The London Marathon,
PO Box 1234, SE1.

Giant of tennis

From Mr Huw Rees

Sir, I would like to add a personal reminiscence on the career of Stefan Edberg, who retired from tennis at the end of last month.

I first watched him play during the junior event at Wimbledon in 1983 and was immediately amazed that a Swedish player actually enjoyed and thrived on playing serve-and-volley tennis. Although his demeanour typified national traits then exhibited by Wilander and Nystrom, his attacking game was an even greater contrast. Here was a future world No 1.

The emergence of Boris Becker removed potential focus from Edberg and enabled him and Tony Pickard to concentrate on the natural improvement required in his game. There were some early carps about his apparent lack of personality and defeatist countenance, but the cognoscenti knew better.

By his first Wimbledon win, in 1988, Edberg had become the greatest reflex volleyer the game will likely see. In spite of Becker's hard hit service returns in the final, he was able to put the majority of them away with volleys hit at acute angles using the return's pace.

It appears contradictory that a man who played such a physically demanding (though graceful) game should also display the sportsmanship that is now a matter of legend. Yet this is the very attribute that certain tennis followers most appreciate about him, as it portrayed a socially acceptable example to future players, in a period when tennis players remain over-compensated and are sometimes criticised for not always showing their teeth.

Unfortunate injuries probably cost Edberg the Australian Open singles title in 1989 and 1990. However, his five-set loss from two sets to one up against Chang in the 1989 French Open final represents the closest a male player has come to winning all four grand-slam championships since Rod Laver's success.

The game would have significantly benefited from Edberg converting two of the ten break-points he held on Chang's service in the fourth set. History would then have recorded that the most complete player of the decade was also the most unassuming.

Yours sincerely,
HUW REES,
8 Gatwick Road, SW18.

Open invitation

From Ms J. M. Roper-Heaton

Sir, In view of Laura Davies's great success this year and the strength of her game, and following Fred Couples's invitation to her to play in his tournament next year, would it not be gentlemanly of the Royal and Ancient to invite her to play in the Open Championship at Troon?

Yours faithfully,
JILL ROPER-HEATON,
Mill Lodge, Horsham St Faith,
Norwich, Norfolk.

SHEEHAN on BRIDGE

BY ROBERT SHEEHAN, BRIDGE CORRESPONDENT

This is a hand from an American event. It was recounted by Ronnie Rubin, a former world champion and victim of the coup.

Dealer East **Love all**

North:
♠KJ103
♥AQJ
♦J764
♣A2

West:
♠52
♥9842
♦9
♣QJ10987

East:
♠AQ
♥K1076
♦K10532
♣65

South:
♠98764
♥53
♦AQ8
♣K43

W	N	E	S
—	—	1D	1S
3C	4C	Pass	4S
All Pass			

Contract: Four Spades by South **Lead: Nine of diamonds**

West's bid of Three Clubs was pre-emptive, a method in common use in the United States. North's Four Clubs said that he had a strong raise to Four Spades.

When West led the nine of diamonds, the declarer (Zia Mahmood) played low from dummy and won in his hand with the queen. He continued with a spade to the jack and queen. Now, how should East (Rubin) defend?

Rubin was convinced that Zia had started with A Q doubleton of diamonds. Why did he think that? It was because, if declarer had A Q 8, he could have covered the lead of the nine with the jack, thus setting up a finesse position against East's ten and ensuring three diamond tricks.

Having come to this conclusion, Rubin switched to a club, hoping to set up a trick there before winning the king of hearts. That does not quite add up — give the declarer six spades and two diamonds, and he will always have to lose a club if he does not have the king. Yet notice Zia's clever play, diverting Rubin away from giving West a diamond ruff.

Zia won the club return in hand and played another spade. Rubin won and played his second club, and now Zia was able to lead a diamond from dummy towards the eight. If East splits, Zia wins the ace and returns the eight of diamonds, setting up a discard for his losing heart.

☐ Robert Sheehan writes Monday to Friday in Sport and in Weekend on Saturday.

WORD-WATCHING

By Philip Howard

LATOMY
a. A quarry
b. The anatomy
c. All the atoms

METASTASIS
a. The study of change
b. Rapid transition
c. A counter-revolution

MOSLINGS
a. Fledgeling duck
b. Momentary irritations
c. Little bits

LAUDIAN
a. Praising
b. Alternative to Benedicite
c. High Anglican

Answers on page 42

KEENE on CHESS

BY RAYMOND KEENE
CHESS CORRESPONDENT

Timman tops

Jan Timman, the Dutch grandmaster, is experiencing a renaissance in his fortunes after a lean period that followed his defeat by Anatoly Karpov in the 1993 Fide world championship match.

Earlier this year Timman won the Dutch championship for the ninth time, then, at the tournament that is at present progress in Groningen, Holland, he got off to a fine start by winning his first four games.

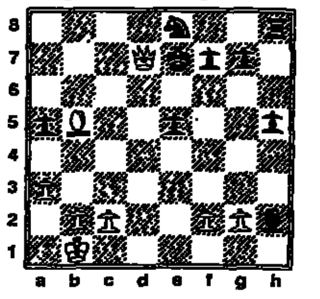
This win was widely considered to be the best of the tournament so far.

White: Jan Timman
Black: Peter Leko
Groningen, December 1996

Caro-Kann Defence

1	e4	c6
2	d4	d5
3	Nd2	dxe4
4	Nxe4	Nd7
5	Bd3	Ngf6
6	Ng5	e6
7	N1f3	Bd6
8	Qe2	h6
9	Ne4	Nxe4
10	Qxe4	Nf6
11	Qe2	Qc7
12	Bd2	b6
13	0-0-0	Bb7
14	Kb1	Rd8
15	Rhg1	c5
16	dxc5	Qxc5
17	a3	a5
18	Be3	Qc7
19	Bb5+	Ke7
20	Nd4	Bxh2
21	Nf5+	Kf8
22	Rxd8+	Qxd8
23	Rd1	Qc7
24	Bd4	e5
25	Bxb6	Qxb6
26	Rd6	Qc7
27	Qc4	Qb8
28	Rb6	Qc8
29	Rxb7	Qxb7
30	Nd6	Qe7
31	Qc8+	Ne8
32	Nf5	h5
33	Nxe7	Kxe7
34	Qd7+	Black resigns

Diagram of final position



After 24, Bd4, if Black tries 24, ... exf5, then 25, Bxf6 gxf6; 26, Rd7 is very strong for White.

British ratings

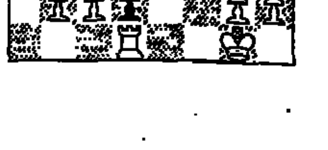
The top British ratings in the new Fide list are as follows (after each player, I give in brackets the number of games played since the last rating list was issued):

Nigel Short (world No 10) 2,690 (49); Michael Adams (world No 15) 2,660 (38); Matthew Sadler (world No 25) 2,645 (42); Jon Speelman (world No 54) 2,610 (32); John Nunn (world No 59) 2,605 (0).

☐ Raymond Keene writes on chess Monday to Friday in Sport and in the Weekend section on Saturday.

WINNING MOVE

By Raymond Keene



Black to play. This position is from the game Madsen — Napolitano, correspondence game, 1953. The combination of his powerful passed pawn on d2 and White's weak back rank allowed Black a quick win here. How did he continue?

Solution on page 42

هكذا عن الأصل

■ CHOICE 1

Bobby Ball adds his own special lustre to *Aladdin*'s magic lamp

VENUE: Now at the Theatre Royal, Newcastle

■ CHOICE 2

... while Gary Wilmot polishes up his Buttons in *Cinderella*

VENUE: Now at the New Victoria, Woking

THE TIMES ARTS

■ DANCE

Veterans come to the aid of the Kirov's party in *The Nutcracker* at the Coliseum

■ MUSIC

At St John's, Catherine Bott delves into the vocal hits of the Middle Ages

FAMILY EVENTS

A daily guide to arts and entertainment compiled by Gillian Maxey

LONDON

THE CHINESE STATE CIRCUS Described as "the world's greatest acrobatic spectacular" the highly acclaimed Shandong troupe presents its two-hour all-human show. The individual and ensemble acts include bench juggling, a contortionist and the remarkable spectacle of 14 girls balancing on a single bicycle. **Roundhouse**, Chalk Farm Road, Camden (0171-482 7318) Today 2.30pm and 8pm. Daily except New Year's Eve, Jan 6, 13 and 20. Until January 26.

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL: Hans Christian Andersen's uplifting story, about a poor little girl roaming the streets on the eve of the new year, provides the inspiration for this magical musical show, devised and directed by Luke Dixon. With original songs by Peter Lewis and Tony Hume. **Bull** 68 High Street, Barnet (0181-449 0048) Today, 3.30pm. Then 3.30pm and 7.30pm most days, ring box office for details. Closed New Year's Day. Until January 4 Ⓢ

PETER PAN Former *Blue Peter* presenters Diane Louise Jordan and Peter Duncan star in an adaptation of J M Barrie's swashbuckling adventure story. Spectacular flying effects and a villainous Hook, played by Jon Iles (DC Dashwood in *The Bill*), make this a fun-packed show for all the family. **Lewisham**, Rushey Green, Catford (0181-690 0002) Today, 2pm and 5pm. Then various times; ring box office for details. No perf Jan 1. Until Jan 19

SCROOGE Anthony Newley back on the West End stage singing the title role in the Leslie Bricusse musical. Tom Watt reprises his role as Dickens's best-loved character, Bob Cratchit. **Dominion**, Tottenham Court Road, W1 (0171-636 2295) Today, 3pm and 7.30pm. Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mats Thurs, Sat, 3pm. Closed New Year's Day

ELSEWHERE

LEATHERHEAD: Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat, one of the most enduring shows from the cannon of Tim Rice and Andrew Lloyd Webber, returns to the Thorndike in Bill Kenwright's production. A musical treat for all the family. **Thorndike**, Church Street (01372 376211) Today, 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat, various times; also Sun Dec 29, 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Until Jan 19.

NEWCASTLE Comedy duo Cannon and Ball star in another pantomime favourite, **Aladdin**. With Paul Usher, alias Barry Grant of *Brookside*, and Felice Arena of *Neighbours*. **Theatre Royal**, 100 Grey Street (0191-232 2061). Today, 2pm and 7pm. Then Mon-Sat, 2pm and 7pm. Until Jan 18

WOKING Gary Wilmot stars as Buttons in the romantic story of **Cinderella**, who meets her Prince Charming and goes to the ball. Rolf Harris, complete with didgeridoo, plays Baron Hardup, with Robin Cousins (who skates on a specially constructed ice rink) and "Spit" the dog. **New Victoria**, Peacocks Arts Centre (01483 761144) Today, 2.30pm and 7.30pm. Then Mon-Sat (and New Year's Day), 2.30pm and 7.30pm; Sun and New Year's Eve, 1.30pm and 5.30pm. Until February 2 Ⓢ

SOUTHAMPTON: Lionel Blair plays the Mirror, with Britt Ekland as the Red Queen, in the classic fairy-tale of **Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs**. **Mayflower**, Commercial Road (01703 711811) Today, 2.30pm and 7pm. Then Tue-Sat, 7pm; mats Wed, 2.30pm, Sun and New Year's Eve, 1pm and 5.15pm. Closed New Year's Day. Until Feb 9

LONDON GALLERIES

Barbican: Carmina Burana Experience (0171-638 4141) ... **Festival Hall**: The Scenic Eye: Visual Art and the Theatre (0171-960 4242) ... **National Theatre**: Dazzle (0171-928 2252)

THEATRE GUIDE

Jeremy Kingston's assessment of theatre showing in London

■ House full, returns only
◩ Some seats available
☐ Seats at all prices

■ ART Albert Finney, Tom Courtenay and Ken Stott in an exceptionally interesting drama about friendship, unspoken resentment and an almost all-white canvas. Matthew Warchus directs. **Wyndham's**, Charing Cross Rd, WC2 (0171-369 1736) Tue-Sat, 8pm; mats Wed, 3pm, Sat and Sun, 5pm.

■ BLINDED BY THE SUN: Frances de la Tour, Duncan Bell and Douglas Hodge play scientists involved in a case of scientific fraud. Ron Daniels directs Stephen Poliakoff's new play. **National** (Cottesloe), South Bank, SE1 (0171-928 2252) Tonight-Sat, 7.40pm; mat Fri and Sat, 2.30pm. In rep Ⓢ

◩ BY JEEVES: Delightful musical creation by Alan Ayckbourn and Andrew Lloyd Webber, based on the Wodehouse heroes, first attempted 20 years ago, now entirely revised. **Lyric**, Shaftesbury Avenue, W1 (0171-494 5045) Mon-Sat, 7.45pm; mats Wed and Sat, 3pm

☐ LE CERCLE INVISIBLE: Victoria Chaplin and Jean-Baptiste Thierrée return with their strange and dreamlike evocation of the arts of circus. **Mermaid**, Puddle Dock, Blackfriars, EC4 (0171-236 2211) Today 4pm. Also perfs on Dec 30, 7.30pm; and mats on Dec 31, Jan 1, 4pm. Then Tue-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sun, 4pm. Until Jan 12.

◩ A CHRISTMAS CAROL: Richard Briers in Neil Bartlett's adaptation. **Lyric**, King Street, London W6 (0181-741 2311) Mon-Sat (except Jan 1), 7.30pm. For mats (2.30pm) contact box office Ⓢ

☐ DICK DAREDEVIL: Action hero of 1944 radio comes to life in the London of doodle-bugs and jitterbugs. Musical fantasy from Phil Willmott's Steam Industry, set in wartime Fitzrovia. **Drill Hall**, Chenies Street, WC1 (0171-637 8270) Tue-Sun, 7.30pm. Until January 18

☐ A DOLL'S HOUSE: No superlatives high enough for Janet McTeer in Anthony Page's first-class production of Ibsen's proto-feminist drama. Excellent playing too by Owen Teale and John Carlisle. **Playhouse**, Northumberland Ave, WC2 (0171-839 4401) Mon-Sat, 7.30pm; mat Sat, 2.30pm

■ THE ELEVENTH COMMANDMENT: Commissioned play from comedian David Schneider in which he plays a single man nerving himself to tell his mother (Sheila Steafel) he fancies a girl who isn't nice and Jewish. Matthew Lloyd directs. **Hampstead**, Swiss Cottage Centre, NW3 (0171-722 9301) Mon-Sat, 8pm; mat Sat, 3.30pm. Until January 18

◩ THE OFFICIAL TRIBUTE TO THE BLUES BROTHERS: Another West End showing for the cult songfest by guys in black glasses. David Leland directs. **Apollo**, Shaftesbury Ave, W1 (0171-494 5070) Mon-Thurs, 8pm; Fri and Sat, 6pm and 9pm

◩ THE WHITE DEVIL: Gale Edwards's thrillingly erotic and violent production of Webster, up from Stratford, with Jane Gurnett, Ray Fearon and good performances all round. **Pit, Barbican**, EC2 (0181-638 8891) Previewing tonight-Sat, 7.15pm; mat Sat, 2pm. Opens Jan 7, 7pm. In rep

LONG RUNNERS

◩ **Buddy**: Strand (0171-930 8800) ☐ **Don't Dress for Dinner**: Duchess (0171-494 5070) ◩ **Grease**: Cambridge (0171-494 5080) ☐ **An Ideal Husband**: Old Vic (0171-928 7616) ◩ **An Inspector Calls**: Garrick (0171-494 5085) ☐ **Martin Guerre**: Prince Edward (0171-447 5400) ◩ **Miss Saigon**: Drury Lane (0171-494 5400) ◩ **The Mousetrap**: St Martin's (0171-836 1443) ■ **Starlight Express**: Apollo Victoria (0171-416 6054) ◩ **Sunset Boulevard**: Adelphi (0171-344 0055)

Ticket information supplied by Society of London Theatre

CINEMA GUIDE

Geoff Brown's assessment of films in London and (where indicated with the symbol ◆) on release across the country

NEW RELEASES

EVITA (PG): Madonna sings with passion, but production overkill plays havoc with Lloyd Webber's rock opera. With Antonio Banderas and Jonathan Pryce. Directed by Alan Parker. **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **West End** (01426-915 574) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636)

◆ **MATILDA** (PG): Exuberant telling of Roald Dahl's subversive tale about a precocious girl (Mara Wilson) who triumphs over pesky adults. Danny DeVito co-stars and directs. **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** Ⓢ (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0171-434 0031) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

THE UMBRELLAS OF CHERBOURG (PG): Splendid revival of Jacques Demy's bitter-sweet musical of 1964, gorgeously restored in pastel colours. With Catherine Deneuve. **Barbican** (0171-638 8891) **Curzon Mayfair** (0171-369 1720) **Richmond** (0181-332 0030)

CURRENT

LE BONHEUR (15): Broad comedy about domestic woes and French lifestyles, with Michel Serrault, Sabine Azéma and, briefly, Eric Cantona. Director, Etienne Chatiliez. **ABC Swiss Centre** (0171-439 4470) **Gate** Ⓢ (0171-727 4043)

◆ **JINGLE ALL THE WAY** (PG): Aggressively American Christmas comedy, with Arnold Schwarzenegger as a dad in search of a prized action toy. Director, Brian Levant. **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Mezzanine** Ⓢ (01426 915683) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Trocadero** (0171-434 0031) **Warner** (0171-437 4343)

◆ **101 DALMATIANS** (U): Glenn Close knocks spots off the dogs in the live-action edition of the cartoon classic. With Jeff Daniels and Joely Richardson. Director, Stephen Herek. **Barbican** Ⓢ (0171-638 8891) **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Leicester Square** (01426-915 683) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Rio** (0171-254 6677) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Chelsea** (0171-352 5096) **Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636)

THE PILLOW BOOK (18): Astounding Peter Greenaway film inspired by an ancient Japanese text. With Vivien Wu, Ewan McGregor. **Gate** Ⓢ (0171-727 4043) **Virgin Chelsea** (0171-352 5096)

◆ **STAR TREK: FIRST CONTACT** (12): Patrick Stewart's Enterprise crew battles the Borgs. Acceptable adventure, if a little too serious. With Brent Spiner, Alice Krige. Director, Jonathan Frakes. **Empire** (0990-888 990) **Odeons: Kensington** (01426 914666) **Swiss Cottage** (01426 914098) **Plaza** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121) **UCI Whiteleys** Ⓢ (0990 888990) **Virgins: Fulham Road** (0171-370 2636) **Trocadero** Ⓢ (0171-434 0031)

TWO MUCH (PG): Antonio Banderas invents a twin brother, so he can woo both Melanie Griffith and Daryl Hannah. Flat romantic comedy, directed by Fernando Trueba. **Virgin Trocadero** (0171-434 0031)

THE VAN (15): Fun and games with a burger van during the 1990 World Cup. Stadent version of Roddy Doyle's novel, with Colm Meaney and Donal O'Kelly. Director, Stephen Frears. **ABC Panton Street** (0171-930 0631) **Warner** Ⓢ (0171-437 4343) (0171-837 8402) **Ritzy** (0171-737 2121)

DEE CONWAY

Her royal Kirovness

DANCE: **Debra Craine**'s faith is restored by the new *Nutcracker* cast at the Coliseum

On the opening night of the Kirov's Coliseum season we saw a vision of Kirov Present, and what a sad sight it was, with a youthful roster of tentative, half-hearted dancers out of touch with the great heritage of their company. Three nights later we saw a vision of Kirov Past in the shape of Altynai Asylmuratova — and what a shining sight it was.

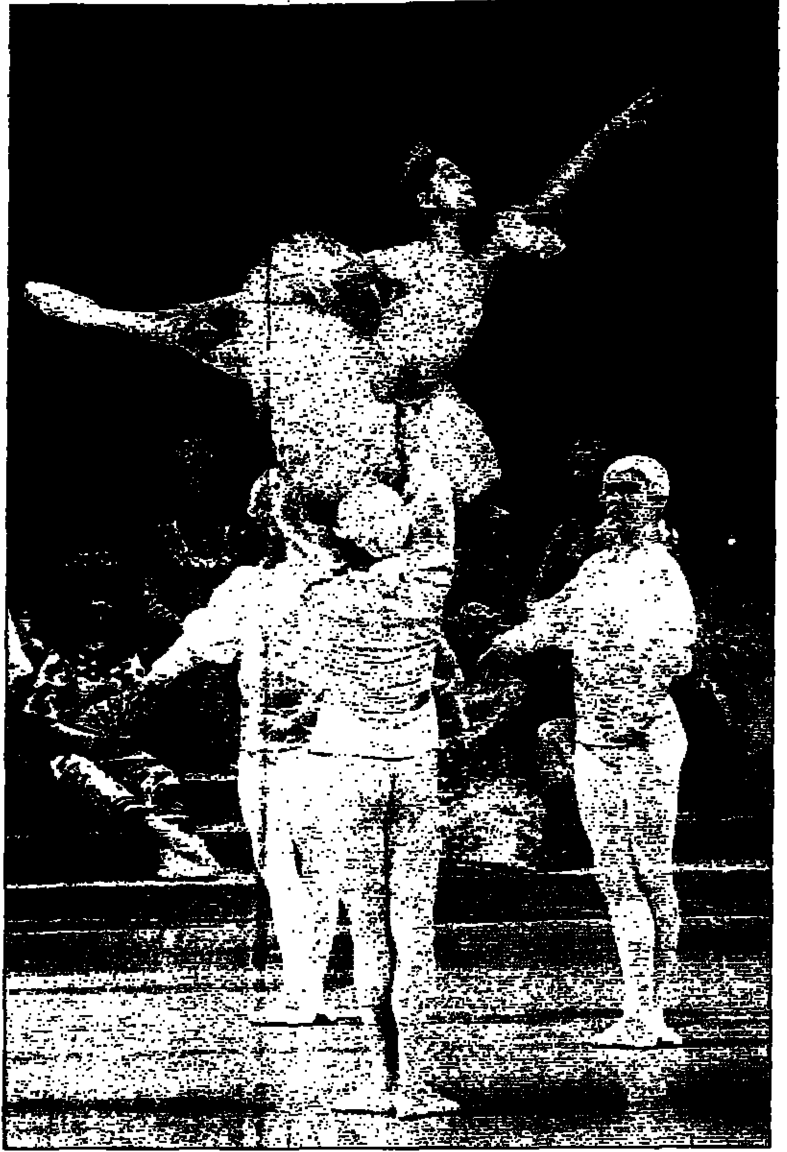
Asylmuratova is the Kirov's leading ballerina, although these days she is as likely to be found dancing with Roland Petit in France as with the Russians in St Petersburg. She joined the Kirov in 1978, a graduate of the legendary Vaganova School, and within four years was made a principal. She has guested with most of the world's leading ballet companies, who love her simply because she represents what the glorious Kirov used to be.

Sublime grandeur is not the quality one would immediately associate with the Kirov's *Nutcracker*, and yet this is precisely what Asylmuratova brings to the double role of grown-up Masha and fantasy Princess. One minute she is radiating maidenly wonderment as Masha; the next she is glittering with majestic authority as the Princess.

Unlike those around her, whose skittishness and reluctance project an unsettling lack of self-confidence, Asylmuratova dances as though nothing could tear her away from the stage. She throws herself into the part with ardent conviction, playfully picking up the musical cues and embellishing the choreography with her own inspired narrative. Her unmitigated joy — directed straight at the audience — is uniquely infectious. Her physique is strong, her outlines splendid. You could not ask for more in a dancer.

Asylmuratova was partnered by Viktor Baranov's Nutcracker Prince, handsome and stalwart. Other members of the cast stood out in cameo: Nina Borchenko elegant as Frau Stahlbaum, Alexandra Gronskaya flaming hot as the Spanish dancer. The famous Kirov corps de ballet went through the motions with a glum sense of duty. Whether their downcast demeanour was mere shyness or a stylistic dictum, I do not know. But it should be discouraged.

If the company as a whole could dance *The Nutcracker* the way Asylmuratova does, the charms of the Kirov's old-fashioned production would be more apparent — and the vision of Kirov Future would be a less dispiriting sight.



The way they were: Altynai Asylmuratova upholds a grand tradition

CONCERTS: Medieval troubadours' songs to charm the moderns; a pianist's energetic debut

A nose for a cappella

Catherine Bott
St John's
Smith Square

POOR Catherine Bott. The last time I heard her give a concert, in the summer, she had a terrible cold: at St John's Smith Square, as part of the Magenta Music Christmas Festival, she was again under the weather.

As before, she soldiered on and managed to woo the audience in a selection of troubadour songs which she performed unaccompanied. There is strong evidence to suggest that this is how they were heard in the Middle Ages and, on the basis of this performance, they worked very well. The troubadours' outpouring of song, so sophisticated in melody and versification, can astound the modern listener.

Bott clearly feels at ease with this repertory, allowing each song a natural flow based on a loosely iso-syllabic interpretation (each syllable having the same duration, however many notes are allotted to it) that combines expressive flexibility with an underlying sense of pulse.

Through a rich palate of vocal colour she conveys well the emotional undertow of each song, adopting a declamatory but lyrical approach that complements the high poetic style; this worked especially well in one of the hits of the troubadour repertory, *Can vei la lauzeta mover*. Rather than reproduce the texts in the programme, she recited the poems in translation before singing, the overall effect being a kind of vocal snake-charming. Decca has just issued a whole CD dedicated to these songs, performed by Bott without an instrument in sight — or, rather, hearing.

For the second half of the programme of early Baroque Christmas music, Bott was joined by a small but very select group of instrumentalists. A bouquet of little-known motets and songs by 17th-century Italian and German composers ended with a Christmas cantata by Alessandro Scarlatti. The pastoral idiom dominated, especially in the charming concluding Pastorale, but a minor-key aria in particular clearly foreshadowed the operatic idiom of Handel.

Cattini's *O che nouvo stupor*, an arioso on the shepherd theme, has a brief but haunting Ritornello, expressively played by Mark Levy on gamba and Paula Chateauneuf on theorbo. By the end of the concert, Bott's cold was taking its toll, but it was an enjoyable evening's music-making nonetheless.

TESS KNIGHTON

Pedal extremes

Gabriela Montero
Wigmore Hall

AT 26, Gabriela Montero is a woman with a past. After being hailed as the greatest living pianist in Venezuela, and compared with Evgeny Kissin when she was but a child, she absented herself for seven years from the concert platform, re-emerged last year, and made her London debut last week.

In those seven years, Montero clearly learnt at least four things: how to play extremely loudly, how to play extremely softly, how to keep the sustaining pedal depressed for as long as is harmonically possible, and how to play almost everything as though it were Liszt.

As it happened, Liszt was removed from the programme at the last minute: his *Funerailles* was replaced by Chopin's *Polonaise-Fantasie*. This immediately revealed the stark dynamic contrasts favoured by Montero which, when fused with a highly physical, supple rubato and some generous pedalling, does tend to distort the musical structure somewhat.

Schumann's Sonata No 1 emphasised the remarkable strength of Montero's fingers, her formidable way with octave passages and, in the *Aria* movement, her skill in creating hauntingly deliquescent quiet passages. If only she had shown an understanding of Schumann's language equal to that of her own idiosyncratic pianism.

Montero was more at home in Albéniz's *Iberia*, where the hard, white light of her playing, the interplay of timbres between the hands, and her bold rhythmic delineation could come into their own.

HILARY FINCH

THEATRES

ADELPHI
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■ FILM 1

The artist as seducer: Anthony Hopkins plays an unappealing genius in *Surviving Picasso*

■ FILM 2

Back in heroic mumbling mode, Sylvester Stallone saves New Yorkers from a blazing tunnel in *Daylight*

THE TIMES

ARTS

■ FILM 3

Abbas Kiarostami completes his moving Iranian trilogy with *Through the Olive Trees*

■ FILM 4

Movie of the year? Lars von Trier's *Breaking the Waves* will be on most lists

CINEMA: **Geoff Brown** looks in vain for the genius inside the satyr in *Picasso*; plus his shortlist of Films of the Year

Portrait of the artist as a bounder

"Anthony Hopkins looks more like Picasso than you might imagine. There is the close-cropped hair, the vigorous tan, the dark brown eyes. But where is Picasso the towering artist of the 20th century?"

Care to spend Christmas with Pablo Picasso? To judge by the film **Surviving Picasso** it would not be easy. He might get you to cut his toenails or hair, and file away the clippings neatly dated. If you were a woman who caught his eye, he might make violent love, or flirt ostentatiously to discomfit a rival. If you were a man in his employ, he might sack you abruptly after decades of service. He also might paint a masterpiece or three and haggle with dealers or, weather permitting, parade his bronzed chest, prance like a satyr, and celebrate his virility with toots on a trumpet. What he won't do is act like Santa Claus.

This is the man played by Anthony Hopkins in the latest Merchant-Ivory production. He looks more like Picasso than you might imagine. There is the mole above the right eye. There is the close-cropped hair, the vigorous tan, the dark brown eyes. The Spanish accent *is left to our* imagination, although at least this Picasso never sounds as though he was born in Port Talbot.

Surviving Picasso
Warner West End
15, 122 mins
Gruelling times with Anthony Hopkins

Daylight
Empire, 12, 115 mins
A tunnel ignites and Stallone yells

Through the Olive Trees
Renoir, U, 103 mins
Peace and beauty from Iran

But where is Picasso the towering artist of the 20th century, the man whose interactions with canvas and brush once formed the material for an entire film, Henri-Georges Clouzot's *The Picasso Mystery*? Not here, except in snatches. This film, based on Arianna Stassinopoulos's biography *Picasso: Creator and Destroyer*, takes as its subject Picasso and women: all kinds of women, mistresses new and old, with or without children, plus one estranged and deranged wife. The story begins in 1943 in occupied Paris, when Picasso first meets an art student, Françoise Gilot (played by screen newcomer Natascha McElhone). She stays for ten years, experiencing all of the master's cruelty and charisma.

By focusing on the man's wayward behaviour, and placing Picasso for much of the time in an uncluttered studio, the film never suffers from the piles of detail that suffocated *Jefferson in Paris*. Instead, it runs other risks. Where Nick Nolte's Jefferson was plain boring, Hopkins's Picasso comes to seem plain nasty. Greater coverage of Picasso the artist would have placed his personality in context: as the film stands, we have little to shield us from the rampant egoism and misogyny. Hopkins's ebullient performance only rubs salt in the wounds. You want to escape this man's company.

In part compensation, Ivory's direction is more animated than usual, and other players get chances to shine. McElhone stands her ground well as the patient Françoise and Peter Eyre sculpts some memorable moments as Picasso's dogsbody Sabartes. Meanwhile, Julianne Moore has fun with the vampish character of Dora Maar, one of Françoise's predecessors. But for better or worse — worse, on balance — this is Picasso's show.

On now to *Surviving Stallone*, or, as the film-makers prefer to call it, **Daylight**. Sylvester Stallone's articulation seems to be getting worse. The louder he yells as he rescues people from a fire-ravaged Manhattan tunnel, the less he can be understood. Not that the dialogue is exactly Noël Coward. Scriptwriter Leslie Bohem's idea of eloquence is to have people say: "Who the hell are you?" or "God, this is too much!" (the latter as water pours through a tunnel ceiling).

Too much indeed; although, to begin with, the spectacle is awesome. The disaster that hits the Holland Tunnel — a collision between a car and a truck stacked with toxic goodies — is expertly staged. A fireball roars; cars are crushed; people are fried to a crisp. After such genuine excitement, Rob Cohen's film has no place to go except down, despite new bursts of debris, water galore, and a close encounter with extractor fans.

But for ardent students of disaster movies, *Daylight* may be a rewarding experience — simply by sticking to the rules. Here is the cross-section of humanity, all incomes, all colours, funnelled into the disaster zone. Here is the maverick man, Stallone, who alone has the nous and firepower to save them. Here once more is the decorative female, Amy Brenneman, who survives the fireball to lend a few muscles. There is also a dog, who lends a few barks. It is all very silly, very noisy and almost, but not quite, endearing.

"I've been wondering recently why it is that countries with a strong history of film-making are turning out worse films these days, and countries with a much younger film industry are producing some wonderful movies." Thus spake Akira Kurosawa, inspired by viewing films by the Iranian Abbas Kiarostami (Neo-Realist, with Post-Modern twinges). He has been an art-house favourite in France for years, and is now deservedly making inroads here.

Kurosawa's question is not so hard to answer. Large commercial industries tend to breed factory products, made to a formula by artisans. Look at *Daylight*. Struggling industries still create individual items, shaped by artists. Look at Kiarostami's idiosyncratic and moving **Through the Olive Trees**.

This is the third in a trilogy begun, quite by chance, with *Where Is My Friend's House* in 1987. The Iranian earthquake of 1990 devastated Koker and other villages visited for that touching tale and Kiarostami used his search for his own friends among the cast as a basis for *And Life Goes On*. In *Olive Trees*, completed in 1994, Kiarostami returns again to Koker, to simulate the filming of *And Life Goes On*. He does this partly to play with the boundaries of cinema and reality (something of an Iranian obsession), and partly to highlight a human drama that occurred during shooting the earlier film.

A young local bricklayer, hired as an actor, finds himself cast as the husband of a local girl whose grandmother, in real life, had refused his offer of marriage. The girl's obstreperousness makes filming difficult, but the bricklayer takes advantage of the repeated takes and enforced closeness to woo the lady once more.

Those who missed the two instalments will miss the resonances of familiar faces, not to mention the Chinese-box feeling of one film locked inside another. But if the frills pass you by, the core material should fascinate. Kiarostami's camera can take an age observing things: be prepared to be patient. As a reward, you come to share a humane director's reverence for ordinary people in a landscape still under the earthquake's shadow.

Olive Trees bears a U certificate, although if you suspect that the kids may not sit still during an Iranian masterpiece there are other films to prise the family out of the house. The mischievous **Matilda**, based on Roald Dahl's novel, will give parents the most enjoyable time. Disney's **101 Dalmatians** passes muster, though more for Glenn Close's performance than the dogs. **Star Trek: First Contact**, the season's other big bauble, is a source of delight for hardcore Trekkers, but more objective viewers may be bored.

Reviewing the year's releases, one realises with a shudder how few memorable films America has produced. *Independence Day* was hyped to the stratosphere, but no media blitz or special effects could arrest the damage caused by its muddled script. American films that stuck their neck out of the rut can be counted on one hand: *12 Monkeys*, *Seven*, *Safe*, *Toy Story* (for technique if not plot material) and, towering above them all, the Coen brothers' wintry, wry *Fargo*.

Equally, we have scarcely been showered with major delights from other countries. Lars von Trier's astonishing *Breaking the Waves* leaps to mind; as does Claude Sautet's urbane *Nelly & Monsieur Arnaud*. Mike Leigh's uneven *Secrets & Lies* still tops the line-up from Britain, although Gillies MacKinnon's *Small Faces* should not be forgotten. No one has had any chance to forget *Trainspotting*.

We should acknowledge, too, those films that dared to be stylistically extreme and expect an audience to have more than a handful of brain cells. Not all were successful, but a cinemagoer's life would be dim indeed without Angelopoulos's *Ulysses' Gaze*, Robert Lepage's *Le Confessional*, Wong Kar-Wei's *Fallen Angels* or Koreeda Hirokasu's *Maborosi*, a haunting film about life, death and bereavement.

As the films tumbled out week after week, several worrying phenomena occurred outside the cinemas. Lottery money began dripping through to local producers just as the available outlets for independent films began to shrivel even more: we may be funding films that no one has much chance to see. Media pontificators whipped themselves up into a fury over a film few in Britain have yet seen: David Cronenberg's *Crash*, a technically skilled but dramatically limited exploration of the car-sex-violence equation, based on a novel published 23 years ago.

And the British Film Institute crowned a sad year by securing £15 million of lottery lolly for a tourist attraction in sheep's clothing — London's third scheduled IMAX screen, towering 65ft high and 95ft wide in the Bull Ring, Waterloo. None of this is exactly the basis for a happy new year but, as Scarlett observed in *Gone With the Wind*, tomorrow is another day.

Romancing the stone

VISUAL ART: The Victorian heyday of coloured sculpture is marked by a new Leeds show

Painting is about colour, without necessarily any great input of form; sculpture is about form, with hardly ever an important element of colour. Right? Well, not invariably, as a major international exhibition at the Henry Moore Institute in Leeds sets out to demonstrate.

To begin with, our perception of sculpture is founded largely on a misapprehension. The Parthenon friezes and the sculpted west fronts of medieval cathedrals are thought of as we see them today: pure white when in marble, a range of discreet stone shades when not. But people who saw them when they were new would have been confronted instead with a panoply of strong, even garish colour. Full realisation of this came as archaeological and ecclesiological studies developed during the 19th century, and what scholars recognised one day artists would catch on to the next. John Gibson's *Tinted Venus* (1851-56) represented a watershed in Britain, and sculpture blossomed rapidly into full colour all over the Western world.

The exhibition points out that as well as "art sculpture" there was a continuing tradition of church sculpture, the domain of craftsmen rather than artists, which never abandoned polychromy. Some of the anonymous examples shown are surprisingly characterful, far indeed from the saccharine saints of convention. Again, increasing Western awareness of non-European traditions, from the Orient or the ancient Middle East, played its part.

Many of the subjects of these sculptures are dutifully exotic, as though that in itself gave intellectual respectability to a deviation from what was still felt to be classical tradition. Hence, if, like Charles Cordier, the sculptor set out to depict a *Jewess of Algiers* around 1862, it would seem eminently reasonable that he should do so in a heady mix of onyx and bronze, gilt and inlay. Whereas if he were to select instead a *Jewess of Prague* he would be more likely to do it in the russet sobriety of bronze.

A taste for colour in sculpture reached its apogee with the *fin de siècle* Decadents and the birth of Modernism. The colour was achieved in various ways. Sometimes it was simply painted on. But more frequently it was the result of a wild mixing of materials. This was the beginning of chriselephantine sculpture, for instance, with its combinations of ivory and bronze, so that the faces and hands of the piece would be given a telling, flesh-like pallor in comparison with the dark richness of the bronze garments into which they were set.

This kind of sculpture, particularly as represented by the camp fantasies of Chiparius, is much collected today. But in Leeds one can see the technique used also by major figures such as Alfred Gilbert.

Sculptors of the period also ventured seriously into "less serious" media such as ceramic, or worked extensively in materials like wax (Medardo Rosso) or pâte de verre (Jean Cros) to extend the whole range of sculptural possibility.

But sculpture is sculpture is sculpture. If it is in three dimensions, even with a bas relief, it does not matter how highly coloured it may be. A coloured plaster relief by Robert Anning Bell may be very similar in style and size to his paintings, but because of the element of dimensionality the ultimate effect is quite different. And there is no denying the added power Jean-Leon Gerome's *Bust of Bellona* derives from the gilt and the inlays.

Camille Claudel's *Lost in Thought* goes, in principle, even nearer to the edge of that kitsch which is always a danger in coloured sculpture, by constituting itself as a sort of fancy lamp, with the light in it emanating from the fireplace before which the female figure pensively kneels. But imagination can somehow contrive to make anything look serious and right.

JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR

● *Henry Moore Institute, 74 The Headrow, Leeds (0113-246 9469), until April 6. Closed today, Jan 1, March 28 and 31*

Jean-Baptiste Hughes's *Ravenna* (1885): a piece from the golden — and other hues — age of coloured sculpture

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Blues for Green

POP

Splinter Group
Empire, W12

ANYONE who was touched by the brilliance of Peter Green in his prime will surely view his current rehabilitation with mixed feelings. An early victim of rock's drug culture, he was in his day a guitarist of supernatural eloquence and a singer who conveyed a dark sadness even beyond the mournful essence of the blues.

While it is wonderful that he has recovered to the point where he can undertake a European tour with his Splinter Group, the passage of time has not been kind to the 50-year-old founder of Fleetwood Mac. Half a lifetime spent battling demons has clearly drained him of much of his artistic vigour.

As he took the stage on Sunday, his demeanour was hesitant and absent-minded, although there was no mistaking the pleasure and growing confidence he derived from an emotional reception.

The set itself was an uneasy combination of this and that. There were blues standards, including the Clark/Perkins song *Homework* and Sonny Boy Williamson's *Help Me* (one of several numbers on which Green played harmonica); new songs such as *Indians* and *Tina*, during which Green played a discreet supporting role to singer and guitarist Nigel Watson; and old Fleetwood Mac favourites, which generally worked best.

The presence of drummer Cozy Powell and bassist Neil Murray was a mixed blessing. Essentially a heavy-rock rhythm section, they provided a valuable thrust to numbers such as *The Green Manalishi* and *Black Magic Woman*, but at other times seemed in danger of overwhelming Green. Often it was left to Watson to guide proceedings, and to take the key solos, as he did during most of *Albatross*. At times it sounded uncomfortably like pub-rock.

They did not attempt Green's signature song, *Man of the World*, although the recorded version was played over the PA speakers as the crowd filed out. Nearly three decades later, it still sounded heartbreakingly sad.

DAVID SINCLAIR

هكذا في الاصل

Creatures small and great

Dark vision of childhood: *The Gashlycrumb Tinies* from *The World of Edward Gorey*, by Clifford Ross and Karen Wilkin (Abrams, £25)

Helen Dunmore

THE FABER BOOK
OF CONTEMPORARY
STORIES ABOUT
CHILDHOOD
Edited by Lorrie Moore
Faber. £15.99
ISBN 0 571 17083 8

All of us have had a childhood, and we claim the territory even while we dispute the best way to tell its stories. In her introduction to *The Faber Book of Contemporary Stories about Childhood*, Lorrie Moore discusses her own choices, and what these chosen stories have in common. All are written in the first person, and almost all of them are about what Moore describes as "moral occasions": that is, moments of discovery, testing, encounter or discernment on the part of the child. American childhood, in particular, is the subject of this anthology, and naturally so, as two thirds of the stories are written by Americans.

Possibly the dream of the right to pursue happiness is buried more deeply in the American psyche than in any other. These stories about childhood tend to confront head-on the incompatibility between that dream and what actually happens. In Toni Cade Bambara's ebullient *Gorilla, My Love* the narrator's ferocious sense of fairness is affronted at every turn by "grown-ups playing change-up and turnin you round every which way so bad". Disillusionment can be subtle or blatant. In Susan Minot's *Hiding*, a mother and her six children come up with the idea of hiding in the airing-cupboard when her father returns home. To their dismay, he shows no concern at their absence, but sits down and switches on the football game. The reader's reaction to this may depend on whether he or she is a parent or a child. And this is, perhaps, one of the problems in the anthology's default setting of the American child first-person narrator. A perspective which at first seems fresh, poignant, touching, or chastening may appear less so 20 stories on into the book.

The finest stories, as always, are the least predictable. While they speak from the intimacy of common experience, they do so in a way that astonishes because it is so recognisable, and yet so new. Alice Munro's brilliance is well represented by *The Turkey Season*, told by a 14-year-old schoolgirl gutting turkeys as a holiday job, who enters a world as strange to her as the "deathly cold ... in the turkey's dark insides." Rigorous, tender and exact, Munro does not put a foot wrong.

Edna O'Brien is also in complete command of her material here. In *My Mother's Mother* she writes of the child's longing for her mother becoming the desire to break away from her, as her grandfather slouches forward into the death that terrifies him, and is laid out looking "like a frosted plank". O'Brien is wonderful on the bizarre and fearsome detail that hedges a child's life. Then there is Spalding Gray's *Sex and Death to the Age 14* with its immortal, untruthful final line: "Yes, yes. I'll buckle down. I'll buckle down. I'll do it. I'll buckle down." All the resistance and feigning grace of childhood lie in that promise of obedience.

JILLIAN EDELSTEIN

Jeanette Winterson: writes as if she is at peace with herself and the world

Creating a grand unified novel

Marianne Wiggins delights in quarky prose

GUT SYMMETRIES
By Jeanette Winterson
Granta. £15.99
ISBN 1 86207 000 8

Grand Unified Theories (gratingly abbreviated to GUTs) pretend toward proving that the fundamental structure of the physical world, every thing of any matter (you, me, the Universe) is in a state of eternal, elegant, slippery flux.

This is Max Planck's fault. If he and Einstein, and Schrodinger and Heisenberg after them, had kept their eyes on the arrow and their minds theoretically closed at the turn of the century, then your head and mine and Jeanette Winterson's might still be as blissfully stuffed with goo as any (Fig) Newton.

But Time marches on (when it's not marching past and/or marching off), and what physicists of this century have given us are not more solid proofs, more stable models of material existence, but a set of possibilities based on things (the sub-atomic performers formerly known as "Quarks") which have never actually been proven to exist.

Sound familiar? Heraclitus would feel right at home with our current Uncertainty Principle. So would Paracelsus. As would any Paraclete, in fact; and every modern poet, novelist and dramatist worth the SALT.

Particle theory lends itself sublimely to practitioners of parts of speech — and (but of course) vice versa. The very word *quark* as a name for something that must be but (so far) isn't, was mischievously appropriated from Joyce's huzza in *Finnegans Wake*, "Three quarks for Muster Mark!"

Unfortunately, most of these quarky works have failed muster, and missed their marks (Tom Stoppard's brave attempt in *Hapgood*, and Martin Amis's mechanical *Time's Arrow*, for example). But now at last a gutsy writer has provided a GUTsy work — playful, elegant and multi-dimensionally luminous enough to be worthy of its subject: Jeanette Winterson's *Gut Symmetries* is a wise and wonder-filled novel.

Its premise is sublime: to propose that there are existential symmetries inherent in everything that is, that was, that will ever be. "Physics, mathematics, music, painting," one of the novel's narrators declares, "my politics, my love for you, my work, the star-dust of my body, the spirit that impels it, clocks diurnal, time perpetual, the roll, rough, tender, swamping, liberating, breathing, moving, thinking nature, human nature and the cosmos are patterned together."

"Perhaps it seems surprising that physicists seek beauty," she continues, "but in fact they have no choice ... The tougher the problem the more beautiful the solution." As if to satisfy that maxim, Winterson does two astonishing things at once. She conceives a book of mirrors, and she hangs it in front of us, capturing us in its reflections.

It is a tale of Joyce's three original quarks, and plays on the theory that they can be or are or will be or have always been Unified. Narratively, she translates particle theory into three forces: a man (Giovanni, called Jove), his wife (Stella) and his mistress (Alluvia; called Alice) — and unites them in all possible combos (Jove and Stella; Alice and Jove; Stella and Alice). Further, and seemingly effortlessly, she combines them not only carnally (in more ways than one), but historically, ranging her narrative backward a generation through time and through place.

Winterson's sense of place and power of description have never been better — it is as though all her previous works of fiction have been exercises working up to this achievement. One senses her mastery on each page — and one senses, too, that the sensibility informing the narrative is one that is at peace with herself and the world: she's no longer writing to prove she can write, nor writing to put out a smouldering argument. This is a fully matured book, all the more astonishing because of the author's age and because of (I must say it) the conceit and emptiness of heart in some of her previous work.

A lingering trace of that conceit still dogs the beginning of the novel (and its brazenly nose-thumbing title), but as soon as Winterson stops announcing what she's going to do and just *does* it, a magic occurs and the narrative sings. Small perfections multiply throughout — her choice of names for characters, for example; her stunning aphorismic turns; her poet's cisions, both pre- and con-.

What begins as a story about one woman's affair, evolves (as true love always does) into a matter of spiritual oneness. "We are and we are not our bodies," Winterson writes. "Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends."

Nor will this novel's potential to generate its wisdom and its joy. To the extent that she has written a story that becomes a part of its reader, Jeanette Winterson has given us the quantum novel.

Howard Davies prefers a subscription to an anthology

Marx to Marx Bros

THE LONDON
REVIEW OF BOOKS
An Anthology
Edited by Jane Hindle
Verso. £12
ISBN 1 85984 121 X

The effects of the long closure of the *TLS* in 1979 are still with us. Both *The London Review of Books* and *The Literary Review* owe their origins to the vacuum created by the Thomson-*Times* dispute, whose *casus belli* is long forgotten. There was, in fact, a third pretender to the *TLS* throne: *Quarto*, edited by Richard Boston. But while it discovered a legion of talented and witty writers (and me) its financial resources expired in less than two years.

Both *Quarto* and the *The Literary Review* were, I would judge, essentially opportunistic creations, seeking to fill a market gap. *The Literary Review* has, with Naim Attallah's support, survived longer, and its largesse (in £30 doses) allowed one impoverished Treasury official to buy a square meal or two in the early 1980s on the back of some caustic novel reviews.

But *The London Review of Books* was something else: a magazine with political ambitions, targeted at achieving the intellectual eminence on the left, over here, of *The New York Review of Books*, over there. It was to be more than a collection of book reviews, rather a journal of opinion; a journal with attitude.

The breadth of *The London Review of Books*'s ambition is described here in a "Reader's Note" from Perry Anderson: "No other journal in the country published such lethal attacks on the callousness, futility and corruption of the conservative system of power." These things can be seen most clearly, I find, from the history department at UCLA.

Fortunately, neither this collection, nor the *Review* itself, concentrates exclusively on the futility of the Conservative system of power. The magazine has also been a home of good writing, often by people who know something about the matters whereof they speak. Both Edward Said and R. W. Johnson, for example, have illuminated Middle Eastern and South African politics for British readers, and they are well represented here. For a long time A. J. P. Taylor's diaries were a special pleasure; sadly, there is no sample of them in the *Anthology* — only a rather limp episode from Alan Bennett, who has written far more amusingly at other times.

Both of its editors so far, Karl Miller and Mary-Kay Wilmers, have also shown a good eye for the quirky, off-centre piece, which needs a longer space to breathe than is typically provided elsewhere. Nicholas Penny's discussion of picture frames, and Stanley Cavell's exegesis of the scripts of Marx Brothers films, are brilliant examples. I knew little of picture frames, and cared less. Now I shall bore my friends with talk of tabernacles and "Sansovinos": a whole new field of gallery trainspotting opens up.

But Miller and Wilmers also have enthusiasms which I cannot share. Edward Luttwak's *Why Fascism is the Wave of the Future* is so much eyewash. Christopher Hitchens's name-dropping hatchet job on Bill Clinton is hopelessly unpersuasive. And Neal Ascherson writes as pompously here as he does in *The Independent on Sunday*. In his case, twice as long is simply twice as dull.

So there are disappointments in this curate's egg. But, on balance, the *Review* still adds to the gaiety of life and remains a lasting memorial to the most fruitful industrial dispute of the winter of discontent. But the attempt in this collection to construct a *London Review of Books* "world view" simply fails. Take out a subscription instead.

All on principle

HARRY WU, who survived 19 years in the Chinese gulag, is a man of principle. After reaching safety in the United States he returned to China five times to reveal that prisoners manufacture export goods and, if executed, have their organs ripped out for commercial transplant. He was re-imprisoned last year for two months. In this honest memoir, *Troublemaker: One Man's Crusade Against China's Cruelty* (Chatto & Windus, £10.99; ISBN 0 7011 6577 4), he shows his principles can take absurd as well as noble forms. On one of his undercover trips to China he met a day-release prisoner serving 15 years and dying of cancer. Mr Wu gave him all the American food in his backpack and the cigarettes he carried for bribes.

Spotting some nearby guards, Mr Wu jumped in his hired car. Then he remembered one of his principles. He ordered the driver to go back. With the guards now close he snatched back the cigarettes, saying "I'm not giving you those damn things. They are bad for your health." But Mr Wu is far from absurd. Like survivors of the Holocaust he is driven to make sure no one forgets. He concedes that he thrives on risk. He sneaked into a hospital ward and filmed a patient who cheerfully described the prisoners whose kidneys had been transplanted into all the men in the room. Peking at first denied such allegations, but nowadays claims that prisoners give their consent before they are shot.

His own sentence in 1960 was for saying during a university discussion that the Soviet Union's invasion of Hungary was illegal. 19 years inside would have been enough for most men. But Mr Wu is hard on his fellow-countrymen. "I believe there is something intrinsic about the Chinese personality that allows us to shift from emperor to chairman, that allows us to treat our own people as slaves."

After Mr Wu was arrested on his last trip to China, in 1995, he says Chinese-American businessmen and lawyers with China contacts kept silent for fear of losing their access. His remarkable Taiwanese wife swung into action and before long Warren Christopher, then American Secretary of State, warned the Chinese that relations would suffer unless Mr Wu was released. So did Henry Kissinger, a close friend of China. Baroness Thatcher weighed in. The Chinese were notified that Hillary Clinton might not attend the Peking women's conference. Mr Wu was glad to get out of prison but he remains hard to please: "Mrs Clinton for me was a bargain for China."

He admires Ahab and his pursuit of Moby Dick. "People say, 'Yes, but Ahab dies,' and I say 'Yes, but the whale dies, too' ... Ahab chased the white whale, and now I chase the white whale of communism." But the whale kills Ahab, destroys almost everything else, and does not die.

JONATHAN MIRSKY

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Tales of a real-life swashbuckler

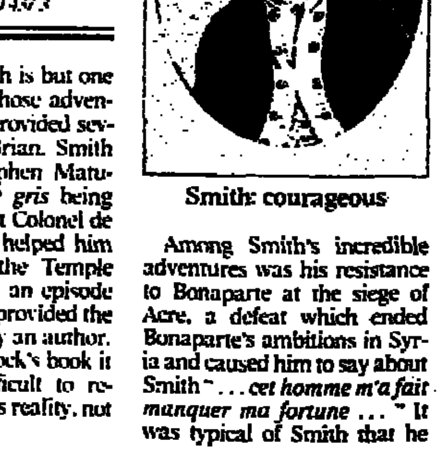
Jock Slater

A THIRST
FOR GLORY
The Life of
Sir Sidney Smith
By Tom Pocock
Aurum Press, £19.95
ISBN 1 85410 437 3

The novels of Forester and Patrick O'Brian with their two naval champions, Hornblower and Aubrey, have inspired generations of youth in Britain and abroad so much that these fictional heroes are cult figures and Jack Aubrey enjoys his own home-pages on the World Wide Web.

How many realise that this is art imitating life? For their plots, both have drawn on the adventures of the naval officers whose lives spring from the pages of the *Dictionary of National Biography* or from O'Byrne's *Naval Biography*. In these volumes your breath is taken by the almost incredible adventures and achievements of the Royal Navy in the age of Nelson. For these men personal bravery, independent action, the calls of diplomacy, and changing fortunes were commonplace.

Sir Sidney Smith is but one of these heroes whose adventure might have provided several plots for O'Brian. Smith even had his Stephen Maturin, his *eminence gris* being the French royalist Colonel de Phelippeaux who helped him to escape from the Temple prison in Paris in an episode which could have provided the story line for many an author. Reading Tom Pocock's book it is sometimes difficult to remember that this is reality, not romance.



Smith: courageous

Among Smith's incredible adventures was his resistance to Bonaparte at the siege of Acre, a defeat which ended Bonaparte's ambitions in Syria and caused him to say about Smith "... *cet homme m'a fait manquer ma fortune* ..." It was typical of Smith that he should be at a ball in Brussels and, having heard the guns of Waterloo and ridden towards the battle, should be the first to shake hands with Wellington, one of the few others to have defeated Bonaparte in battle.

Other highlights of Smith's career included service in the Swedish Navy, a romantic attachment with Queen Caroline, experiments with weapons, including perhaps both Fulton's and Johnstone's submarines and Congreve's rockets, and specialised amphibious landing craft. He also helped pioneer the Royal Navy's greatest contribution to humanity in the 19th century, the long crusade against the slave trade. Although Smith served under all the great admirals of the age, he made few friends in the Navy for, unlike the fictional heroes whom he has helped to create, he had many personal faults.

Few could keep up with his habitual and excessive self-exertion. That most British of heroes, Sir John Moore, was quite unable to understand the real merit hidden beneath much of Smith's extravagance and vanity.

This is the fifth biography of Smith, but none has summed up Smith's character so well as John Laughton in the *Dictionary of National Biography*: a man capable of displaying sound judgment, energy and courage but flawed with a strong, fantastic and vainglorious strain. Tom Pocock is to be congratulated on a well-researched, lively retelling which brings Smith the hero to life again, warts and all.

Admiral Sir Jock Slater, GCB LVO ADC, is First Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Staff.

Antonia Fraser is gripped by a compelling tale of passion and untimely death in the 17th century

Frankie and Bobby

UNNATURAL MURDER
Poison at the Court of James I
By Anne Somerset
Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £20
ISBN 0 297 81310 2

"Frankie, it will not be." With these words, the youthful Earl of Essex, having "laboured a quarter of an hour", gave up on making love to his wife, Frances Howard, forever. The marriage could not be, and now would not be, consummated. It was shortly before Christmas 1612. The stage was set for one of the most bizarre sex 'n' poison scandals of our annals, the fact that it all took place at the Court of King James I giving the mystery a further piquancy. (No modern royal scandal can compete with this one.)

Giving up after a mere quarter of an hour — although it must have been an eternity for Frankie — may seem to indicate a rather faint-hearted approach on the part of the 21-year-old Essex. However, the latest effort was merely the last unsuccessful endeavour in what had been a series of failures ever since the young couple, married in their teens, were allowed to cohabit. What happens afterwards is a sordid yet fascinating story which Anne Somerset, in *Unnatural Murder: Poison at the Court of James I*, delineates with great skill.

The marriage of the Earl of Essex and Lady Frances Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk, in 1606 was planned as a political alliance. The fact that love did not come into it neither made the marriage unique — love matches were rated sentimental rubbish at the time — nor doomed to failure. Even Essex's lack of performance might have been endured were it not for two considerations. One was Frances's consequent inability to bear a child; the second, perhaps more important, was Frances's own beauty which meant that she inevitably attracted other offers from courtly gallants.

The man whose offer she accepted was Robert Carr, and odd as it may seem by modern standards, King James, his homosexual patron (certainly in love with Carr, if not certainly his lover), approved the match. This left the problem of annulling the Essex marriage — since paradoxically the Reformation had left Protestant England without divorce laws, only the cumbersome ecclesiastical process of annulment, which meant, literally, there had been no marriage in the first place.

A remarkable woman: Frances, Countess of Somerset

Unfortunately at this point the luckless Essex complicated matters by declining out of pride to admit to his impotency in general, only in particular towards Frances. In short, the woman was to blame with her taunts of "cow, coward" and so forth.

At the same time Robert Carr's confederate Sir Thomas Overbury reacted with dislike and disdain to the proposed union with Frances, whom he referred to as "that base woman", having apparently assumed that Robert Carr was in the relationship for dalliance, not matrimony. The arrest of Overbury and his committal to the Tower of London was the first grisly step which led to his death, either by poison (as contemporaries firmly believed) of from septicaemia, as a result of a leading doctor's unwise medical technique, which as Anne Somerset points out is at least a possibility.

If we accept the contemporary hypothesis of poison, who wanted Overbury dead? A number of underlings were tried for poisoning the wretched man, and hanged in batches. Nevertheless, the prime suspect remained Frances, by now married to her lover and thanks to his ennoblement Countess of Somerset. The whole annulment process was tricky enough, yet Overbury, who hated not only her but the whole house of Howard, was threatening disclosures to wreck it. Eventually the scandal got too great for King James to contain, and both Earl and Countess of Somerset were tried, found guilty but given a royal pardon. Their sentences were commuted to imprisonment, and not particularly rigorous imprisonment at that.

On the evidence presented by Anne Somerset, one can only agree with her about Frances's moral guilt — Frances intended to kill Overbury with her disgusting jellies and potions, even if the unwise doctor got to him first. Equally, her suggestion that Robert Carr, Earl of Somerset, was not actually guilty seems to be plausible enough. Anne Somerset's comment that it is impossible nevertheless to feel much sympathy for him (irritation with a feckless character?) must be balanced against her real imaginative sympathy for Frances.

The behaviour of Sir Edward Coke prosecuting the countess at her trial proceeded from the simple premise that "adultery is poison". Since Frances had committed adultery with Robert Carr (a shaky premise if the first marriage had been annulled into nonexistence) *ergo* she must, as an adulteress, be a poisoner. The vicious misogyny with which Frances was treated may not acquit her of causing Overbury's death, but it certainly explains the desperate measures she felt impelled to take to secure a chance of happiness — marriage to Robert Carr. As Anne Somerset writes, Frances was in many ways "a remarkable woman, differing radically from the conventional pattern of docile femininity which 17th-century females were expected to follow". This gives a further tragic dimension to Anne Somerset's gripping narrative.

A Whitworth 12-pounder during field trials in 1863

More than a rifle bore

John Grigg

SIR JOSEPH WHITWORTH
"The World's Best Mechanician"
By Norman Atkinson
Sutton, £25
ISBN 0 7509 1211 1

In 1846 Jane Carlyle visited Joseph Whitworth's factory in Manchester and wrote of him to her husband that he had invented many wonderful machines and, despite lacking airs and graces, had "a talent that might drive the Genii to despair". C. P. Scott, born that year, and later much helped and encouraged by Whitworth, said after his death that few had done more to carry forward "the great task of humanity", which was to establish "the supremacy of intelligence over the material universe".

Victorian Britain's pre-eminence in the world owed at least as much to its engineers as to any other group of people; yet they have received far less attention than they deserve, and Whitworth's name in particular is almost completely absent from the pages of general history. One reason, in his case, is the humdrum character of his inventions, vitally important though they were. Such achievements as a true metal plane, uniform screw threads, minutely accurate measures and gauges, and hexagonal bores for rifles, have none of the romantic associations of the steam engine or wireless telegraphy.

Another problem with Whitworth is that the story of his long life (1803-87) cannot be humanised by personal records, since hardly any survive. Stockport-born, he left school at 14 and then developed his mastery of mechanical engineering in various jobs before setting up on his own in 1833. He was twice married, and his second wife may well have been his mistress for some years before the death of his first. He lived for a time at The Firs, Fallowfield — which is, however, much better known as the residence of C. P. Scott, to whom he let it for a peppercorn rent when he acquired an estate in Derbyshire. He had no children, and left his very large fortune in trust for good causes.

Norman Atkinson, well aware of the difficulties of the subject, has nevertheless written an interesting book about Whitworth, which at the same time throws an even more interesting light on himself — and on the contemporary Labour Party. Atkinson was a machine-tool draughtsman before becoming, for more than 20 years, a left-wing Labour MP. His technical background enables him to understand and explain Whitworth's inventions. But what must strike the reader more forcibly is his reaction to Whitworth as a social and economic phenomenon.

While it is no surprise that he applauds Whitworth's view that the State should intervene to promote technical education and impose quality control in industry, it is rather astonishing to be told that "much political effort has been dissipated over past decades, arguing fatuously whether industry should be state-owned". It is equally remarkable that he attacks the fatal restrictiveness of British craft unions.

Whitworth had no time for trade unions, but paid his men above union rates and was altogether a most enlightened employer. His co-partnership scheme pointed towards "a share-owning democracy much in advance, as it happened, of the very limited parliamentary democracy which existed at that time". Unfortunately it was a failure, as Atkinson notes without a trace of ideological relish.

His book is not the easiest to read, partly because it is somewhat awkwardly written. All the same, it is well worth reading, and one can only admire the author's fairmindedness and generosity. As an evidently chastened socialist of our age, he has paid a fine tribute to a giant of Victorian capitalism.

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"How intolerable, how high-minded, how tender to me . . . and somehow tremendous" — Virginia Woolf with her father, Sir Leslie Stephen, in 1902

"That old wretch my father," wrote his daughter Virginia fondly, "how intolerable, how high-minded, how tender to me ... and somehow tremendous". Virginia Woolf gives a pretty just estimate of "the adorable wretch", and it is only fair to add that for most people — including Thomas Hardy and the Americans Oliver Wendell Holmes and James Russell Lowell — he was, as the last pronounced, "the most loveable of men". Fellow "penny a liners", as he referred to the journalistic fraternity, warmly agreed, although towards the end of his life Leslie Stephen affected to have become very jealous of Augustine Birrell, a feather-light essayist whose copious production gave rise to the term "birrelling".

Leslie Stephen's production was copious all right — he was a workaholic and a dedicated literary and social historian — but he was no birreller. An *homme serieux* even by Victorian standards, a good public speaker and genial clubman, he was also painfully shy and vulnerable — "skinless" he called himself — who exploited the instant attraction felt for him by strong calm women. His younger daughter saw all that and portrayed it in *To The Lighthouse*; but the novel that had exorcised the memory of her father cannot, naturally, express so clearly either her secret debt to him, nor her devotion.

Son of a distinguished family which included well-known judges and civil servants, Stephen did well at Cambridge and got a fellowship which he turned into a permanent tutorship by taking orders. The Stephens, like the Stracheys, were sceptics and intellectuals; Stephen had no agonising struggle, like the earlier Victorians who lost their faith, for he seems never to have had much of one. He soon nonetheless decided he must resign his job, and the holy orders he had taken with it.

For such a man in those days that was not really a risk. With his industry and connections he was soon earning more as contributor and later Editor of *The Cornhill Magazine* than he could have done by teaching. He visited America during the Civil War, of which his view, unlike those of the English Tories, was the politically correct one. He made many friends, and in 1867 he married Thackeray's daughter Minny and spent a honeymoon in the Alps which resulted in a lifelong enthusiasm and expertise. Vivid and charming, informative though seldom soul-searching, his letters give us an admirable picture of his circle and his times, and make a fine companion piece to Noel Annan's brilliant biographical study *The Godless Victorian*.

Minny, lively, protective and motherly, died abruptly of eclampsia having produced two sons and three daughters, of whom the eldest, Laura, was so delicate and "odd" that she spent a long and shadowy life in institutions, anguished over by her father in his lifetime but more or less ignored later on by her siblings. Stephen was prostrated by his wife's death, as well as exasperated by his clever and flighty sister-in-law Anny, who was insisting on marrying a man 20 years younger than herself ("Why prolong anything so unpleasant?" demanded Stephen in one of his few epistolary outbursts. "If you could give it up altogether, well and good — I should be delighted; but short of that I would do it at once"). Anny nonetheless remained a devoted and helpful friend, and before long Stephen had married Julia Duckworth, who took his cares and family burdens upon her capable shoulders. Julia's handsome sons by her previous Duckworth marriage were, however, famously to cause trouble for the younger of the Stephen daughters.

Apart from letters to Millicent Fawcett, the influential feminist, and to George Smith, "the prince of publishers", valuable chiefly for the light they throw on contemporary society and Stephen's views about it, the most touching show his absorption in his family, and his concern for their welfare. He saw that the orphaned Virginia, further bereft of her stepmother and stepsister, "needed a woman to confide in"; and he was full of concern and anguish when she had whooping cough as a child. "The children ascribe it to a demon they have christened Rakasch, and I think it is a plausible theory." There speaks a scientific and open-minded Cambridge man.

Pain of the long goodbye

Erica Wagner

SO LONG, SEE YOU TOMORROW
By William Maxwell
Harvill, £8.99
ISBN 1 86046 307 X
ALL THE DAYS AND NIGHTS
By William Maxwell
Harvill, £10.99
ISBN 1 86046 308 8

ERICH HARTMANN/MAGNUM

Maxwell's finely observed tales convey a plain-spoken portrait of the American Midwest

Perhaps, in all our lives, there exists a frozen moment when it seems to us that things can only get better. The narrator of *So Long, See You Tomorrow* recalls the world of the American Midwest in the carefree Twenties, before the Depression, before the war; recalls his father before his wife, the narrator's mother, died: "It was still possible to think, as my father did, that the present was in every way an improvement over the past, and that the future was bound to be even more satisfactory."

But the future is bound by no such certainty; the boy's mother dies, is replaced by an unsatisfactory stepmother; he drifts into friendship with a boy called Cletus Smith. It is a casual friendship, the almost accidental conjunction of two shipwrecked mariners on a lonely shore. Together they kill time, playing among the wooden ribs of an unfinished house. But then there is a murder, the small-town community is riven by death and adultery, and the boys are parted — almost as accidentally, it would seem, as they came together. But it is this parting that haunts the narrator, and drives him to reconstruct the terrible events that led to it.

For 40 years, William Maxwell, now nearly 90, was an editor at *The New Yorker*; this slim novel, his first for 18 years, was published in America more than 15 years ago. Harvill now publishes it here, along with a volume of Maxwell's collected stories, as a prelude to introducing his backlist to Britain. It is about time, for this is fine writing.

So Long, See You Tomorrow, like much of Maxwell's writing, is about a world that ought to be in balance but is not. Building his vision of the events that led to the murder, he is able to enter the minds of the participants — even a dog — with seeming effortlessness. Cletus observes his parents' divorce: "'Thou shalt not bear false witness,' the Bible said — but why not, if the jury couldn't tell the difference between the truth and a pack of lies and neither could the judge?" The work's physical slightness belies its moral weight as its precise prose probes this essential dilemma, attempting to link events with the mysterious emotions that set them in train. This is barely possible in a climate where the narrator is forced apart from even his own feelings, where his kindling sexuality is felt only as "pure physical sensation ... It was as if I had found a way of singing that did not come from the throat."

That is Maxwell's way of singing, too: his writing seems too simple for the effect it conveys. This simplicity can have, at first reading, an old-fashioned flavour; but I, for one, would rather take a ride in Maxwell's comfortable saloon car than be hurled about on a rollercoaster.

His stories, retrospective, reflective, venture into the same emotional territory — though many of them are set in the world of Maxwell's later life, the cosseting apartments of New York's Upper East Side, the broad lawns of Connecticut homes. Yet through it all runs a stream of doubt. In *Over By the River*, a husband is distressed by intimations of a robbery; his daughter dreams of tigers escaped from the zoo. In *The Pilgrimage*, the Ormsbys drive long and hungry miles to eat at a particular restaurant in Périgueux; their failure — or possible failure — to find it strikes at the heart of their identities as worldly folk. *A Set of Twenty-one Improvisations* take the form of fairytale ("Once upon a time there was a poor fisherman who had no one to go out on his boat with him") and meditate on friendship, on solitude, on secrets, loving explorations of the nature of humanity.

This is truly the secret of all good writing: the writer must care what people are like, what they feel, how they feel it. It is this that gives writing more than skill, that gives it soul; William Maxwell's tales, long and short, have the elusive ability to reveal us to ourselves, taking us beyond the frozen moment of perfection and guiding us gently into the wonder of uncertainty.

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CHANGING TIMES

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GENERAL APPOINTMENTS

Legal Aid Means Assessment

The Legal Aid Board is the largest purchaser of legal services in England and Wales. Over recent years we have initiated major changes in the delivery of a service which affects the lives of millions. At the same time we have made real progress in promoting Total Quality Management in all areas of our operation.

As part of a major package of further reforms we are taking over legal aid means assessment from the Benefits Agency. This will result in a fully integrated service provided, through our thirteen Area Offices and will represent a significant service improvement.

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c£30k London

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Qualified to degree level or equivalent you will have solid experience of operational or project management, an analytical frame of mind and an ability to communicate clearly and simply to a wide range of audiences. You will be numerate, confident in your dealings with policy makers and commentators at all levels and committed to fairness in the delivery of a highly customer focused service. Ideally you will also possess a working knowledge of financial services, Inland Revenue practices and the major welfare benefit systems. Ref: A1318.

If you believe you have the skills to fill these challenging new roles, please send your CV to Austin Knight Limited, Knightway House, 20 Soho Square, London W1A 1DS. Please quote appropriate reference number. Closing date for receipt of CV's is 7th January 1997. Assessment centres will be held on 22nd and 23rd January.

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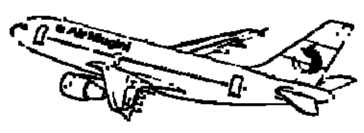

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- As a key member of the corporate team and with more than 200 staff reporting to the position, compensation levels will not be an issue for the right candidate.

APPLICATIONS

Please Note: All applications will be treated in the strictest confidence, with no approach made to contact current employer or referees without expressed permission first being granted by the candidate.

Please send written applications by fax, including full personal details together with copies of qualifications by 31 December 1996 to.

The Director –
Personnel & Properties
Fax: (675) 327 3601
or mail to:
The Personnel Director
AIR NIUGINI
PO Box 7186
BOROKO NCD
Papua New Guinea

Air Niugini

INP E31870

Strathclyde Passenger Transport Executive is the statutory body responsible for passenger transport services in the West of Scotland. It operates in accordance with the policies set by democratically elected councillors appointed to the Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority.

Strathclyde Passenger Transport provides the largest local rail network in the United Kingdom outside London, directly operates the Underground in Glasgow, provides bus services to meet social and special needs and is active in the development and promotion of public transport.

Due to a structural review and impending retirals, applications are now invited from persons with suitable relevant qualifications and experience for these key posts.

Director General

£73,000

The Director General is the principal member of the Executive responsible for the execution of the policies of the Authority and the overall management of the Executive. You must have the vision and expertise to lead the team to develop and enhance public transport in the West of Scotland.

Director OF CORPORATE AFFAIRS

£58,400

The Director of Corporate Affairs will be a member of the Executive Board, Clerk and Legal Adviser to the Authority and will be responsible for the management of the Authority and the provision to both the Authority and the Executive of the full range of support services including finance, legal, human resources, IT and policy development and review.

Recruitment packs which provide further information on the Authority and the Executive can now be obtained from the Director of Personnel, Glasgow City Council, 48 Albion Street, Glasgow G1 1LH or by telephoning 0141 287 5125. Completed applications should be returned no later than Monday 6th January 1997.

John F Anderson Secretary Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority

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Please send your CV to Mark Knight, CFS Europe Ltd, Intec Business Estate, Wade Road, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG24 8NE

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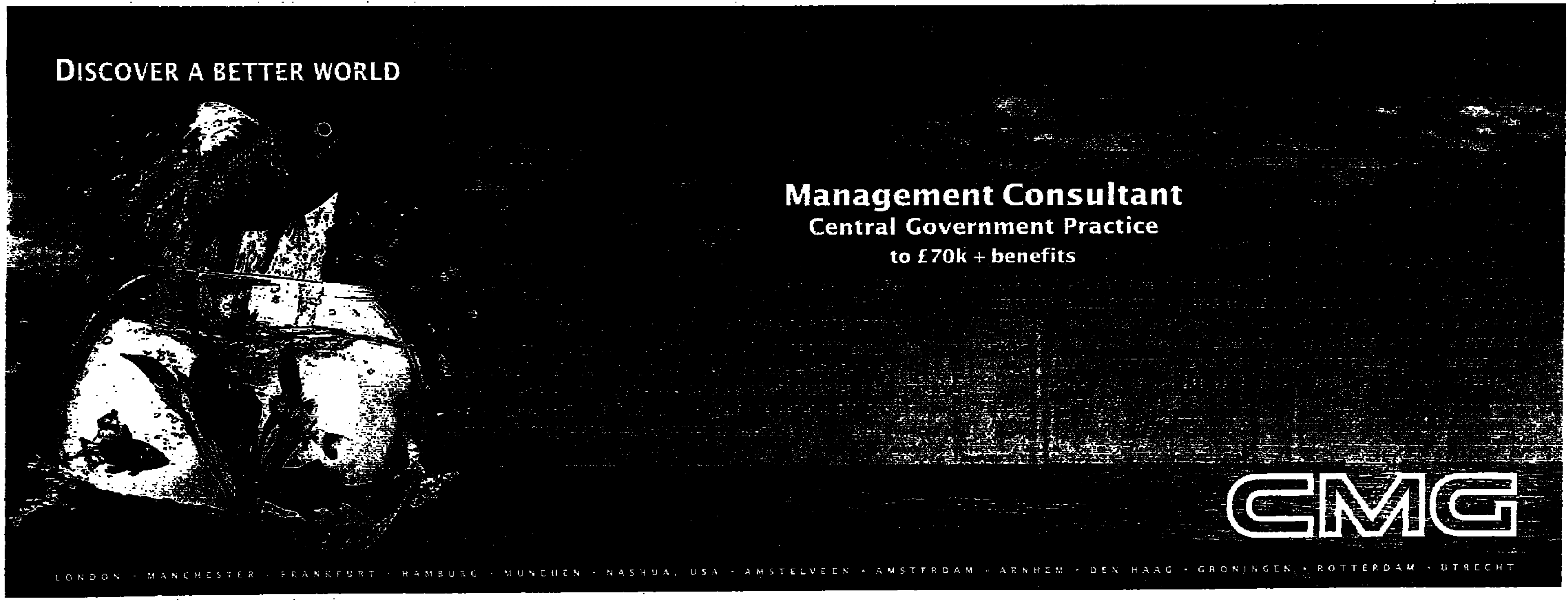

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customer service

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Thames Water is the largest water company in the UK - and also proving the most flexible. An exciting programme of change is restructuring the organisation as a matrix of interdependent core businesses. One of these businesses is Customer Field Services, which delivers a fast response to customers' service problems 'in the field'. While working with a central IT function, we are setting up a capability to drive out the benefits of the systems used within CFS. So this opening for a Business Systems Manager in CFS brings with it all the scope for influence and initiative of a greenfield opportunity.

A strategy of large-scale investment is driving us to the forefront in a changing utilities market - which means that you will sponsor our major systems projects. Working with the central IT function, you will help make decisions as to which technology will best help us meet the needs of millions of customers, coaching colleagues in how to get the most out of it. Your perspective will extend to the interface between CFS and the other core businesses at TW, so you must rapidly develop a sense of how the organisation works as a whole. Using IT to provide accurate information and support service routines, you will also develop business systems to enhance the efficiency and accountability of our external contractors - who make a significant impact to our service delivery.

Setting technology to work in innovative ways, you will be crucial to the success of our change programme. Your influence will extend throughout all management levels and you will have the conviction and credibility to use it effectively. With a minimum of 5 years' managerial experience in the development of projects, in-depth knowledge of the preparation of IT business cases, and preferably some knowledge of mobile customer services, you will draw on your sophisticated commercial awareness as you analyse and resolve complex problems.

In addition to a generous salary we offer an extensive range of benefits including pension and performance-related pay. For an opportunity to lead change at the most senior levels, send your cv to Fiona Peett, Personnel Manager, Thames Water Utilities, Rose Kiln Court, Rose Kiln Lane, Reading RG2 0HP. Closing date: 13th January 1997.

Thames Water

on the move

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Managing Director

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Your priority will be to lead the operational and strategic development of the business and drive both organic and acquisitive growth. This will inevitably mean challenging the status quo and achieving evolutionary change. Fundamental to this will be your leadership of the board to ensure a focused and unified approach to taking the business forward with the ultimate aim of a flotation.

A graduate, you will have proven success in taking profit responsibility for a comparable, high technology component manufacturing business, operating in international markets. Experience of acquisitions and/or being part of a successful flotation will be advantageous. Strategic vision, decisiveness, team building skills and leadership ability are indispensable requirements.

Please send full personal and career details, including current remuneration level and daytime telephone number, in confidence to David Owens, Coopers & Lybrand Executive Resourcing Ltd, Temple Court, 35 Bull Street, Birmingham B4 6JT quoting reference D553 on both envelope and letter.

هكذا في الأصل

Ski market climbs new peaks

By Graham Duffill

THE TOP end of the skiing market is thriving. Bookings for the most upmarket operator are 18 per cent higher than at Christmas last year.

The skiing industry has always relied on the rich to keep it in business, although that seemed likely to change in the 1980s boom years, when there was a sudden rush of less affluent skiers.

Crystal Holidays, Airtours, the Canadian resorts, Eastern Europe, Andorra and the Pyrenees will be among the beneficiaries of average-income families that became hooked on mountains, snow and *aprés-ski* and have become diehard skiers.

When most skiing operators dipped downmarket to pick up the new budget skiers, David Kemp switched from publishing to create a company, in 1987, that would cater for the other end of the market.

The Ski Company's chaletholiday prices begin where others end, and weeks that cost more than £1,000 a head are more common than those with three-figure prices.

Mr Kemp explains: "I wanted a company that provided the sort of holiday I wished to go on and which the market did not offer."

The strategy was expensive. His idea was to buy or lease chalets for several years and to staff them year-round. Typical of the staff are Paul Gow and Diane Beck, who run the Chalet Gueret in the Portes du Soleil in the French Alps. Ms Beck is a professional cook and Mr Gow an expert on cheese, who briefly owned a cheese shop on the Isle of Wight after he gave up working as an arbitrage broker in the City.

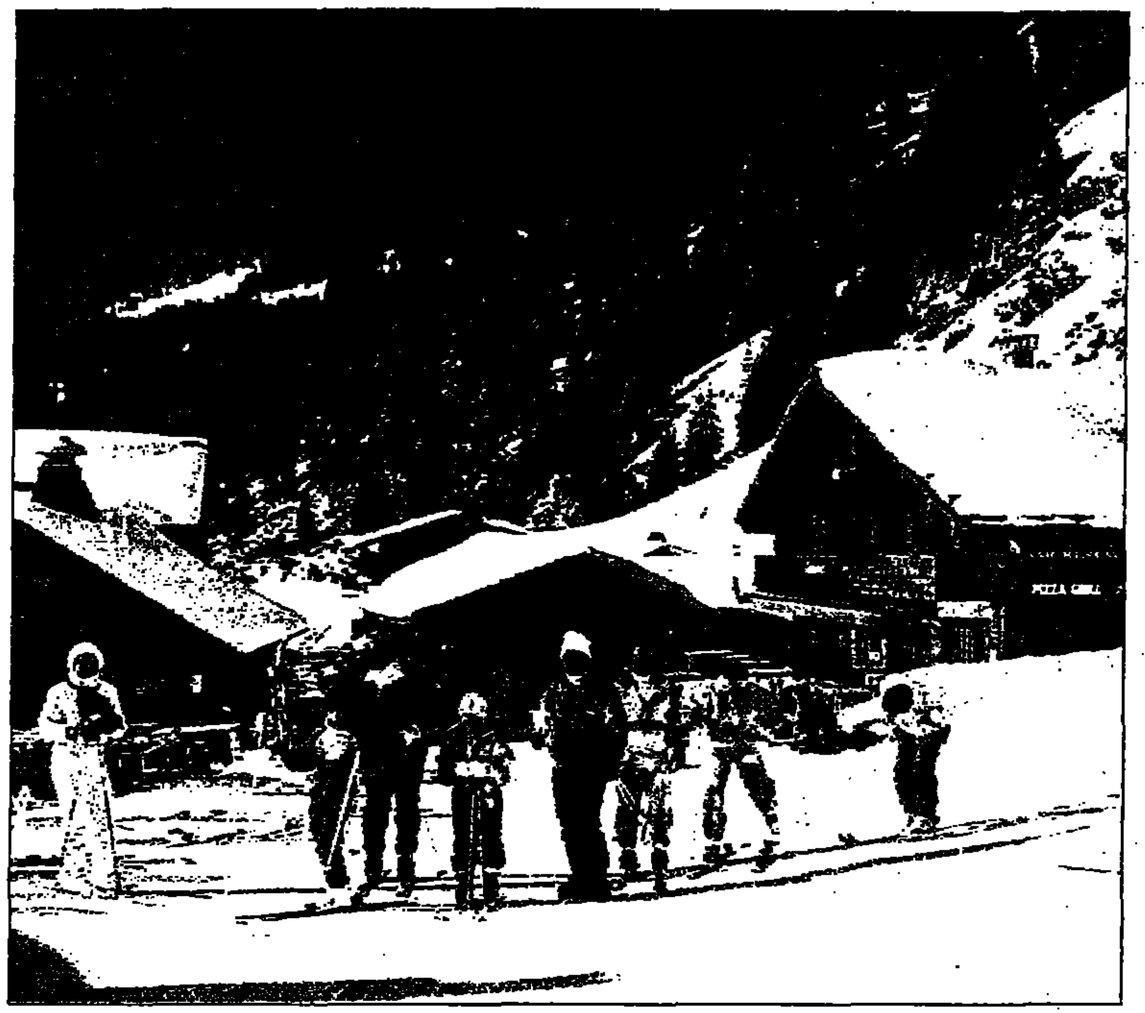
Mr Gow will act as chalet manager, *maitre d'*, driver of the minibus at the client's beck and call, deliverer of children to ski school, organiser of ski guides and lift passes and, importantly, expert on how to get the best out of the area and avoid hitches.

The cook lays on as many meals or snacks as required and drink flows as freely as guests request. A week of such personal attention over Christmas costs about £1,500 a head and all nine chalets are fully booked. Low-season prices fall to £758 in the Chalet Gueret in Morzine, France, and £787 in Méribel in January.

Two years ago the Ski Company merged with the upmarket tour operators Abercrombie & Kent to reduce costs and increase its marketing power. Bookings are up by 18 per cent and for the first time before Christmas the company is 89 per cent booked for February and March.

Ski Scott Dunn, which also targets the upmarket end of the ski industry, has had to turn away as many requests for accommodation as it could fill. The company's Andrew Dunn says: "We are 80 per cent full for the whole season."

The ski industry as a whole is 14 per cent up after two seasons in which the number of people going skiing slumped by 5 per cent each year. Crystal Holidays reports a 50 per cent rise in numbers to Bulgaria and Andorra. Andy Perrin, the marketing manager, says: "Many are beginners, which is good news for the industry."



French leave: Morzine, one of the six resorts at which the Ski Company offers its luxury chalets

BARGAINS OF THE WEEK

Bag a safari in the January sale

SAFARIS at a saving of up to £100 a person are available from Kumuka with a 20-day tour of Kenya and Tanzania leaving Nairobi on January 14 costing £495 a person. Take your own tent; flights extra. Details: 0171-937 8855.

■ BOSTON breaks are available from today with four nights for the price of three from Funway Holidays. Deals start from £319 a person including Virgin Atlantic flights, hotel and a discount booklet. Details: 0181-466 0222.

■ SWISS Travel Service has short breaks at ski resorts from £283 a person including two nights' accommodation and flights. Details: 01992 456123.

■ CHILDREN under 12 go free with two adults to Disneyland Paris until Easter with Paris Travel Service. Two night self-drive holidays start at £136 an adult including entrance and accommodation. Details: 01992 456100.

■ THREE free nights at a beach resort on Bintan, Indonesia, are on offer in January and February from Simply Tropix for those booking five nights at the Concorde Hotel, Singapore. Prices start from £750 a person including flights. Details: 0181-875 1777.

■ FREE upgrades to half-board accommodation in Eilat are available on some Longwood holidays in January. Prices from £339 for a week, including hotel, with return flights. Details: 0181-551 4494.

■ RAMADAN specials are on offer from Jasmin Tours from January 10 with six nights B&B at Aqaba on the Red Sea costing £349 a person, flights included. Details: 01628 531121.

HOTELS

STAY for two nights on any January weekend at Cardiff's Park Thistle Hotel at £30 a person a night and get a third night free. Details: 01222 383471.

■ The Montcalm Hotel in London has spaces for its New Year's Eve dinner at £65 a person. Details: 0171-402 4288.

■ The Hotel Villa Emma in Dresden has a two-night opera programme from January 1, including ticket and a bathrobe. Details: 0800 181535.

FERRIES

UNTIL January 10, a Eurostar standard daytrip return starts at £49 from Waterloo and Ashford to Lille and Calais; £59 to Brussels and £69 to Paris. Details: 0345 303030.

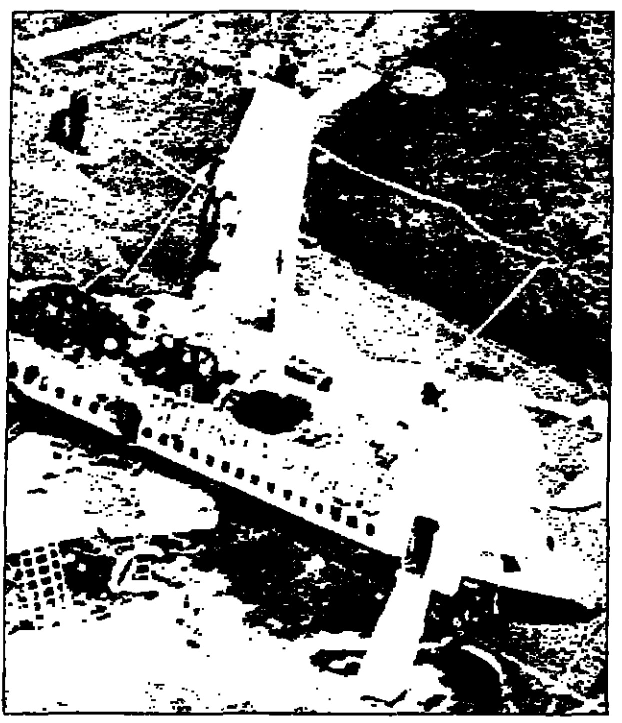
■ A DAY return on Wightlink Ferries on Portsmouth-Fishbourne (Isle of Wight) is available through Eurodrive until December 31. The £31 fare applies after 9.25am on weekdays. Details: 0181-324 4000.

■ SWANSEA Cork Ferries has a "Sunday Savers" fare costing £165 return (a car and five passengers). Details: 01792 456116.

FLIGHTS

FOUR airlines — Virgin Atlantic, Air New Zealand, Ansett and Malaysia — are to market a round-the-world fare. Priced from £777, the Wanderer provides travel to Australasia with three stopovers in the Far East, US or South Pacific. Two further stopovers can be added for £50 each. Details: 01293 747747.

■ AIRLINE Network has an Air France Concorde Special. Passengers fly from London or Manchester to New York with Concorde returning on a sub-sonic business-class flight at £2,462. Book by December 31. Details: 0500 747 757.



This aircraft fire at Manchester airport killed 55 passengers

Jet escapes made easier

By Harvey Elliott

AIRLINES are to be ordered to improve emergency escape procedures and ensure quicker evacuation from charter and scheduled aircraft in the event of a fire.

The new regulations are to be made mandatory throughout Europe more than ten years after similar safety recommendations were made after the 1985 Manchester airport disaster, in which 55 people were killed when a British Airtours Boeing 737 caught fire on take-off.

The tough new rules are to be introduced in the spring. The key change is in the way that the emergency exit above the wing of most aircraft is opened. In the Manchester fire, many survivors complained that they had trouble opening the escape door because seats were too close, that it was difficult to unlock and remove the overwing door and that passengers became jammed in the narrow aisles.

After years of detailed investigation by scientists at Cranfield University in Bedfordshire, the Civil Aviation Authority is close to finalising a Europe-wide agreement on the new safety measures.

John Beardmore, a Manchester survivor and leader of the Sci-Safe organisation which has been pressing for improvements since the Manchester accident, said: "At long last, something looks as if it will be done to improve emergency evacuation."

The new procedures — already signalled by European safety organisations ahead of a formal agreement expected in the new year — include widening gangways near galleys and lavatories, and changing the way emergency exit doors can be opened. Instead of being turned and pulled inwards, the doors will have to slide up on rails to a stowage area behind the luggage bins. The existing minimum width of a gangway for any airline in Europe is 480mm compared with the proposed 720mm minimum.

The Cranfield research suggested that existing escape hatches were too heavy for most passengers to handle in an emergency. The new method of opening the door relies on springs and a guide rail to shoot the door up to the ceiling.

Talks are now under way to finalise the wording of new safety rules which will be sent to all airlines operating in Europe and which could eventually be extended worldwide. Some modifications will have to be carried out immediately; others will apply only to new aircraft.

Many changes in aircraft safety were introduced soon after the Manchester fire, but survivors have long argued that there are still too many loopholes which need to be filled to ensure passenger safety and have accused the CAA of dragging its feet over their introduction.

A CAA spokesman said it had acted as quickly as it could. "Research had to be undertaken in great detail," he explained. "We cannot just introduce changes unilaterally and any proposal has to be approved on a European-wide and we hope, eventually, worldwide basis. This all takes time."

GENERAL APPOINTMENTS

MANAGING DIRECTOR

At Communications Test Design, Inc., a global leader in the telecommunications field, we are embarking on exciting new ventures for the new age of communication. Presently, we are seeking a Managing Director for our Milton Keynes, England facility.

Responsibilities for this position will be to establish, execute and oversee business strategies, as well as to manage daily operations to meet customer and business requirements. In addition, this person will be responsible for revenue growth and profit/loss of the operation and the development and maintenance of customer relationships. The ideal candidate must have a minimum of 10 years experience in Operations and Business management, a four year university degree, the proven ability to execute and develop business strategies, and well developed leadership, customer service and communication skills. Telecommunications and/or service industry experience preferred.

If you are interested in becoming an integral part of a growing corporation which offers an attractive compensation and complete benefits package, please send a letter and your resume to: COMMUNICATIONS TEST DESIGN, INC., 1373 Enterprise Drive, West Chester, PA 19380, U.S.A., FAX: 610-436-8914, Attn: Human Resources. EOE M/F. Smoke/Drug Free Workplace.

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NISSIN (UK) Ltd
requires
Traffic Co-ordinator
Up to £15,000 per annum.

Applicants should be educated to at least 'A' level standard and must be numerate. Minimum three years' forwarding experience, fluency in both Japanese and English and the ability to coordinate our work with our agents, sales staff and management essential.

Please write, enclosing CV and current salary, to Mr H. Ono, Nissin (UK) Ltd, Unit 5, The Griffin Centre, Staines Road, Feltham, Middlesex TW14 0HS

EXECUTIVE CHEF TRAINER

Urgently required to develop a new chain of restaurants serving authentic Asian Food. The applicants must have high quality and proven experience in authentic cooking including:-
Vietnamese, Thai, Malay, Indonesian and Chinese.
The position holder must also have management experience and be able to train and develop the menu.

Salary 25K + benefits.

Please send CV to:-Tania Webb at 20-21 Leicester Square, London WC2H 7LE.

Closing date 23rd January 1997.

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The company is planning to strengthen its Services sector team with an individual whose operational expertise complements the unit's business development skills. Analysing client needs and strategies, you will help design creative solutions, project manage training and delivery, and generally contribute to the team's knowledge base.

You will ideally be an intellectually capable internal consultant, or possibly a line manager working in Quality, Customer Service or HR, within a progressive service organisation such as financial services or utilities. A team player, energetic and lively, you should also have the stature to command the respect of senior management in client companies.

In return, our client offers you the opportunity to work in a stimulating environment and broaden your business understanding within a fast-growing international consultancy.

Please write, in confidence, with full career and salary details to Ann Rodrigues, MSL International Limited, 32 Aybrook Street, London W1M 3JL. Please quote ref: 61746.

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GLASGOW 0141 248 7700 LEEDS 0113 245 4757 MANCHESTER 0161 934 5020 NEWCASTLE 0191 261 5333 NOTTINGHAM 0115 941 8848

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Full-time sales assistant required for Knightsbridge Retail/Mail Order Company, immediate start. Please reply in writing to The Manageress.

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PURCHASING CO-ORDINATOR
required for International Sourcing/Distribution Company. Candidates must exhibit strong commercial and technical background in electrical and DIY products and experience of international trade, degree level required (business degree desirable). Fluency in Mandarin, Cantonese and English essential
Please reply to: Gary Newman, Purchasing Manager, Unit 4 Brunswick Industrial Park, Brunswick Park Road
New Southgate, London N11 1JL

Arbitrage Trader
Leading LIFFE company requires Arbitrage Trader. Applicants will have held a similar position within the industry and are unlikely to have less than three years' experience. They must be able to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of this specialised area of futures trading.
Expected salary package - £[illegible].
Apply in writing to Box No [illegible] c/o Times Newspapers Ltd, 1 Virginia St, London E1 9BL

Datasat Communications Limited is a privately owned, independent communications provider specialising in the distribution of data, video and audio services via satellite.

The Company is developing its operations in Central and Eastern Europe and is looking to recruit an Engineer to install and maintain satellite communications systems within this important market growth area.

You will be educated to degree level or equivalent, with at least 2-3 years' experience within the satellite communications industry. As regular trips to Central/Eastern Europe, particularly Russia and the Ukraine, will be an integral part of the job, you will need to be fluent in at least one of the languages of the region.

Apply, in writing, with a copy of your CV to Terry Power, Datasat Communications Ltd., Ashbourne, Back Lane, Chalfont St. Giles, Buckinghamshire HP8 4NY.

EXPERIENCED FUEL OIL TRADER

Required for large international trading company. Minimum five years experience in trading feedstocks (straight run fuel oils, naphthas and condensates) is U.S Golf and Europe. Both trading and refinery experience essential. Salary 90K.
Reply to:
P.O Box 4460, Henley-On-Thames, RG9 4TP.

MANAGING DIRECTORS - DIRECTORS - MANAGERS

We want to talk to Experienced Senior Executives (40+) who are interested in Career Change. If you have the background we seek, if you are ambitious, if you want or need to change career, we want to hear from you. Please send a full CV to Allan Douglas, Director ADTI Limited, Management & Business Consultants.
"Dedicated to Business Change"
Warwick Corner, 42 Warwick Road, KENILWORTH CV8 1HE.

RISK MANAGEMENT PRODUCTS SALES

As a leading Global Investment Bank, we are seeking to capitalise and expand on our capabilities in Indian Risk Management Products. We require an individual to undertake Risk Management Products Sales in relation to the Indian Equities Market for an international and domestic client base. The successful candidate will be based in London and must have:
● Detailed knowledge of the Indian financial market and business environment together with a comprehensive understanding of the political and cultural issues involved in dealing in Indian financial products.
● At least four years relevant work experience with a major international financial institution in India.
● Fluency in Hindi and English.
● A relevant degree and an MBA from a leading business school.
Potential client contacts in India would be advantageous. Salary £30,000 plus discretionary bonus. Written replies to Box No 2162, c/o The Times, PO Box 3553, 1 Virginia Street, London E1 9BL.

Equities stay firm in short session

TRADING PERIOD: Settlement takes place five business days after the day of trade. Changes are calculated on *the previous day's close, but adjustments are made when a stock is ex-dividend. Changes, yields and* price/earnings ratios are based on middle prices.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
559	414	Allied Domecq	450	+10½	6.6	13.6
625	477	Bulmer (HP)	547½	...	3.1	16.1
131	67½	Burn Stewart	69		6.2	73.3
680	615	Glenmorangie A†	670		1.8	23.7
498	411	Grand Met	454½	...	4.5	14.4
493	425	Guinness	452½	-2	4.2	14.0
378	315	Highland Distl	335½	-1	3.1	16.2
803	255½	Matthew Clark	262½	...	11.4	12.5
141	91½	Merydew Wt	108½	...	5.4	14.4
2612½	1375	SA Breweries†	1462½	-16¼	2.2	..

BANKS

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
3858¾	2743¾	ABN-AMRO	3803¾	-16¼	3.3	14.6
758	528	Abbey Natl	756½	+½	3.8	14.0
400	315	Allied Irish	392½		4.6	11.8
398½	285	Aust New Z	392¾	-2¾	5.1	..
6187½	3843¾	Bank America	6085¾	-121¼		
316	227½	Bank Scotland	309½	+1	3.0	11.4
1041½	683	Barclays	1000	-2	3.5	10.9
528½	413	Bk of Ireland	517½		4.0	11.7
482	360	Cater Allen†	381½		9.8	15.1
6493¾	4031¼	Citicorp	6218¾	-71¼		
392	307½	Close Bros	320½	+3	3.9	12.8
1575	1318¾	Commerzbank	1337½		3.5	
1350	878¼	Dai Ichi Kan Y	878¼	-21½	0.5	..
3412½	2750	Deutsche Bk	2750	-9¾	2.5	
806¼	593¾	Espirito Santo	790¾	+12½	4.2	11.4
1507	881½	Fuji Bank Y	898¾	-25¾	0.5	..
472	260	Gerrard	271	..	10.6	11.0
267½	198	Hambros	224		4.2	19.0
1329	931	HSBC	1297½	+2	3.6	12.3
1295¾	930	HSBC HK	1285	+2	3.7	12.0
498½	385	Irish Perm	485½	...	2.9	13.3
197	143	King Shaxson†	182½		6.2	20.4
465	405	Leopold Jt	485		5.2	27.6
436	294½	Lloyds TSB	433½	-1½	3.5	18.4
740¼	568	Nat Aust Bk	683	-4¼	5.9	9.4
726½	605½	Nat West	683	-½	4.8	9.8
67	49½	Rea Brothers	60		2.1	23.6
596	464	Royal Bk Scotl	549½	+2½	4.3	12.1
1547½	1185	Schroders	1515		1.4	17.2
1340	890	Schroders N/V	1337½	-2½	1.6	15.2
135	89½	Singer & Fried	128		4.2	8.4
729½	547	Stand Chart	720		2.1	14.8
115½	85½	Union	96½		3.8	10.4
£174¾	£157¾	Wells Fargo	£164¾		1.9	
382	264	Westpac	335½	-6	4.0	10.9
360	258	[illegible]	307½	...	5.1	15.4

BREWERIES, PUBS & REST

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
90	36	[illegible]	75			11.2
845½	702	Bass†	813½	-3½	3.8	16.0
70	40	[illegible]	53½		4.1	14.8
205	161	Burtonwood Brwt	174½	...	4.0	15.7
138	92	City Centre Rest	137		2.0	25.8
629½	463	Compass Gp	614½	-½	1.8	24.7
287½	190	Eldridge P 'A'	260	...	2.6	15.7
540	413	Fuller Sm 'A'	442½	...	2.7	14.6
636	546	Greenalls Gp	595		3.3	17.7
675	507¾	Greene Kingt	646	-½	3.1	15.9

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
685	428	[illegible]	631½	...	2.9	18.1
26½	18	Bridgend Grp	20		1.2	
113	76	Brit Fittings	90½		4.8	11.2
310	245	[illegible]	307½		4.7	12.8
194½	152½	Car Group	180½	+1	2.6	18.4
160	105	[illegible]	111½	+1½	3.8	7.3
107½	72½	Charles Sidney	76½	..	6.2	10.8
79	54½	Cook (DC)†	55	..	6.7	6.5
175	94½	Dag Motors	96½	..	10.0	8.8
163	125¼	[illegible]	132½		2.5	13.4
494	328	Diploma†	367		4.9	13.6
467½	328	Electrocomponts†	462	+½	1.9	28.0
314	125½	Eurodis Elec	164½		3.7	15.9
134½	65	Eurodollar†	106½	..	7.0	10.8
105	76	European Mtrt	78½		8.4	8.0
375	217	Evans Halshaw	220	-1½	8.4	8.6
67	39½	Fife Indmar	42½	..	8.7	6.4
338	248	Flexitel Grp	315½	..	2.5	18.1
39¾	16½	Gardiner	28½	..	3.8	11.4
81	33½	Glenchewton	63	..	2.1	18.8
97½	70½	Gowrings	82½	..	4.2	14.0
101	72	Hamlett	82	...	8.1	7.6
292	216	Hanis (Philip)†	247½		4.4	15.7
295½	200½	Headlam	259		2.8	21.5
200	132	Holders Tech	148	-3	5.1	13.9
242½	153	ISA Intl	240		1.3	21.8
316	231	Inchcape†	265½	+5½	3.8	22.8
78	33	Jacks (Wm)	52½	...	4.8	18.1
260	169	Kwik-Fit	216	-½	3.0	17.3
390	299	Lex Service	320	+2½	6.0	10.2
155	105	Lookers	106		9.4	6.2
17	10½	Malaya Grp	11¼		7.3	12.1
9¼	5½	Middlesex	6	..	1.6	9.2
47	31	Midshires	38	...	0.8	...
565	440	Moiswint	470	...	2.1	13.0
349	230	Mortensbor	308½		8.9	9.2
162	108	PCT?	125		7.7	11.7
331	201½	Parica	321½		2.8	15.4
342½	272	Pendragon	342½		3.4	18.6
211	145	Perry Gp	190		5.5	9.7
745	602	Premier Farnell	739½	+4½	1.9	28.8
190	135	Quicks Group	146½		5.5	11.0
315	185	REA	302½	+2½	1.7	36.3
3	2	Reece	2½			
54	20	Ronson	27½		6.8	9.5
4½	2	Ross Gp	3			
56	38	SEP Indl	38	-½	5.9	9.9
105	60	Saltire	62½		2.0	20.3
417½	248	Time Productst	378½	-2½	3.6	15.5
301½	123	UMECO	298	+2½	2.6	16.8
332½	263¾	Vardy (Reg)	282½	...	2.8	13.7
500	325	WF Elect	497½		3.2	21.2
59	25½	Wilshawt	32½	+½	3.3	9.6
149¾	75¼	Wyko	140½		2.0	18.9
148	104	Young (H)†	124½	..	4.2	..

DIVERSIFIED INDUSTRIALS

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
1½	0½	Anglo Utd	0½			3.0
388	288	Antofagasta	342½		1.9	13.3
387	253	Ascot Hldgs	285		2.3	
1058	785	Broken Hill	827¼	-6	2.9	19.3
340	229	BTR	270	-1½	4.4	20.2
505	411	BAT	481½	+3	6.4	9.4
224	102½	Berisford Intl	144	-1	4.0	23.8
147½	108	Bibby (J)†	138		6.9	8.0
65	50½	Brierley Inv	53½	+½	8.3	9.4
972	728	Charter	741½	+4	4.7	10.5

HEALTHCARE

HOUSEHOLD GOODS

INSURANCE

INVESTMENT TRUSTS

LEISURE & HOTELS

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
86	50	Chesdon	80½		2.5	15.6
85	55	Clubhaus	80½			
251	160	Eurocamp	181		7.6	8.7
208	110	Euro Disney	113½			
200½	138½	Euro Leisure	178½			4.7
19	10½	Ferrangford	10½			12.0
86	49½	First Choice	70		5.1	
400	336½	First Leisure	339		3.9	19.7
190	142	Friendly Hotelst	150		4.8	19.2
903½	619	Granada	861½	+1½	1.9	23.1
57	35	Hi-Tec Sports	41½			16.6
253½	148	Hornbyt	231½		3.1	52.9
553	415½	Hozelock	456	+½	3.1	16.4
193	156	Jarvis Hotelst	160½		0.8	
301½	201	Jurys Hotel	287½	-½	3.0	

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
31½	19	Kunick	26		3.4	
232½	143	Ladbroke	231½	-½	3.2	30.6
394½	212½	London Clubst	303½	+½	3.2	30.1
650	188	Man Utd	650	+3½	1.0	43.3
96½	77½	Mandarin Orntl	82½		4.0	19.4
359	278	Millennium & Cop	351	-½	0.2	26.9
183½	89	Northern	183½		2.9	18.7
146	114	Prism Leisure	118½		6.1	6.9
38	28	Queensborough	29½			
32	11½	Queens Moat	18	-½		
547	398	Rank Grp	422½	+3½	4.7	14.1
47	31	Ryan Hotels K	40½		5.3	8.2
1525	930	Savoy Hotel A	1470	-5	1.2	57.4
215	171½	Sinclair (Wm)	186½		5.4	11.6
108½	75¼	StatusA	96		2.8	
373	167½	Stanley Leisure	351		3.1	27.0
20½	6¼	Tandem	7½			
346	346	Tamport	346		1.4	23.5

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
63½	43	INVESCO Tokyo	45½	-½		
96½	65	J Fry 2nd Ut	85		10.5	10.6
84½	66½	J Fry Euro U	82		6.8	13.2
280	162½	JF Fledg Jap	163½	-1½		
90½	74	Jupiter Ex Inc	89½		10.9	8.8
7	3½	Jupiter Ex IncWt	3½			
83	70	Jupiter Gbl Capt	78½		12.4	10.0
31½	24½	Jupiter Gbl Ptd	31			
128	108	Jupiter Intl Gen	122½		3.8	
303½	252	Kleinwt Chrl	295½		2.3	52.2
130	99½	Kleinwt E Mkt	100½	+½		
162½	133	Kleinwt End	159½			
87	74	Kleinwt H Inc†	76		15.5	8.0
298	264	Kleinwt O'seas	268		1.8	71.4
176½	136	Kleinwt Smlr	171		2.4	50.6
597	296	Korea—Euro	515		0.4	
118½	85½	Latin American	99½			
1095	913	Law Debenture	928	-3	3.1	35.1

1996 High	Low	Company	Price (p)	+/-	Yld %	P/E
494	364	Head Sharf	458½		0.4	
158	127	Herald	136		0.6	
94	71	High Income Tt	88½	...	9.0	13.0
157	127	H Govett Smlr	139		2.2	59.0
110½	75½	HTR Jap Smaller	75½	-1½		
17½	9	I&S Eq	17			
159	114	I&S UK Smllrt	153½		2.4	35.1
150	129	Inv Cap	147		4.6	34.6
157	97½	Int Biotech	97½			
70	21½	Int Wts	27½			
114	93½	INVESCO Asia	102½		0.7	
65	43	INVESCO Blue†	48½	..	21.6	5.0
182½	135	INVESCO Eng Intl	174½		0.8	58.9
92	56½	INVESCO Jap Ots	56½	-1½		
137	74½	INVESCO Korea	77½			

MEDIA

MINING

OIL & GAS

OTHER FINANCIAL

PHARMACEUTICALS

PRINTING & PAPER

PROPERTY

RETAILERS, FOOD

RETAILERS, GENERAL

SUPPORT SERVICES

TELECOMMUNICATIONS

TEXTILES & APPAREL

TRANSPORT

WATER

ALTERNATIVE INV MARKET

BUILDING & CONSTRUCT

BUILDING MATERIALS

CHEMICALS

DISTRIBUTORS

ELECTRICITY

ELECTRONIC & ELECT

ENGINEERING

ENGINEERING, VEHICLES

FOOD MANUFACTURERS

BRITISH FUNDS

SHORTS (under 5 years)

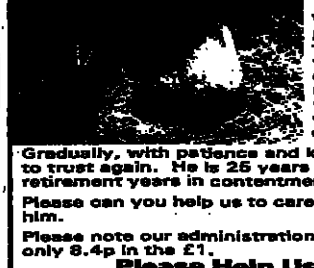
LONGS (over 15 years)

UNDATED

MEDIUMS (5 to 15 years)

INDEX-LINKED on projected inflation of: 10% 5%

PLEASE HELP A LITTLE DONKEY IN DISTRESS



Mozart was confined alone in a stable for 2½ years.

He was visited only occasionally to be brought food and water.

His bed was a build-up of his own dung. Mozart's hooves had grown long and twisted, he had lice and was in pain through laminitis.

When we rescued him he was petrified. He would quiver at the back of his new stable when approached. When the door was opened it took many days before Mozart would venture out and he was just as frightened of donkeys as he was of people.

Gradually, with patience and kindness, Mozart is beginning to trust again. He is 25 years old and can now spend his retirement years in contentment.

Please can you help us to care for Mozart and donkeys like him.

Please note our administration and fund raising costs are only 8.4p in the £1.

Please Help Us To Help Them

Please send donations to:
The Donkey Sanctuary,
(Dept LTMJ), Sidmouth,
Devon, EX10 0NU.
Tel: (01395) 578222
Enquiries to Dr E. D. Svendsen, M.B.E.

Reg. Charity No. 264818

I enclose Cheque/Postal Order for £
Name: Mr/Mrs/Miss
Address
Post Code

مكتبة الأهل

THE TIMES UNIT TRUST INFORMATION SERVICE

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
AIB UNIT TRUST MANAGERS LTD				
01895 259 783				
Gorland Amer	231.20	244.60†	+ 0.30	
Gorland Equity	290.30	308.70	+ 1.10	1.82
Gorland Euro	265.40	280.70	+ 0.10	0.59
Gorland Eqt Bal	132.30	137.10		2.57
Gorland Corp Bd	76.40	78.92	+ 0.08	6.67
Gorland Japan	141.90	150.10†	- 2.30	..
AXA EQUITY & LAW UNIT TST MGRS				
01200 663 231				
General Acc	689.70	733.60		2.42
General Inc	575.70	612.50		2.42
UK Growth Acc	475.50	505.90	..	2.57
UK Growth Inc	307.80	327.50		2.57
Higher Inc Acc	845.70	899.70		3.96
Higher Inc Inc	450.50	479.30		3.96
Gilt/Fxd Int Acc	213.00	225.00	..	5.48
Gilt/Fxd Int Inc	92.77	98.51		5.48
Nth America	362.90	386.10		
Europe	356.80	379.60		0.40
Brit Ercell	94.17	100.70†		2.69
Bri Fndmtls Acc	130.30	138.00		4.50
Bri Fndmtls Inc	80.43	85.57		4.50
Global Opps	99.26	105.60†		
Balanced Acc	64.21	68.31	..	2.53
Balanced Inc	59.96	63.79		2.53
Japan Acc	39.74	42.28		.
Pac Basin Acc	392.50	417.60		0.88
ABBEY UNIT TST MGRS				
0345 717 373				
Gilts & Fixed Int	132.60	140.70†	+ 1.00	6.76
High Inc Equity	187.90	201.00	+ 0.60	4.52
Worldwide Bond	270.20	286.50†	+ 0.60	4.67
European Growth	389.00	415.80	- 1.50	0.32
Asian Pacific	311.10	332.70	- 0.88	0.41
Assets & Earnings	310.70	332.30†	+ 1.30	2.84
Euro Capital Acc	187.60	200.60	- 0.60	0.79
Extra Inc	43.10	45.85†	- 0.09	7.98
General	285.00	303.20	+ 0.70	2.88
Global Opps	68.16	72.51	- 0.16	0.56
Japan	96.09	102.80	- 2.40	
Managed Inc	48.30	51.38†	+ 0.11	4.38
Mastertrust	166.90	178.50	- 0.30	1.34
US Emerging Cos	197.30	209.90	- 2.10	
Ethical	83.13	88.44	- 0.44	2.00
International	133.20	141.70	- 0.60	0.51
Dividend & Growth	70.40	74.89	+ 0.16	4.47
Global Gwth & Sec	74.16	79.30	- 0.16	2.35
Latin America	64.23	68.33	+ 0.10	0.57
Capital Reserve	146.70	146.70	+ 0.20	4.77
ABERFORTH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 220 0733				
UK Small Cos	2341.00	2438.00		
ABTRUST UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0800 833 580				
Amer Inc & Growth	60.57	62.85	- 0.16	0.15
Emerging Mkts	69.39	72.27	+ 0.08	0.05
European	149.60	155.50		
[illegible]	1091.00	1159.00	- 1.00	1.61
Extra Income #	47.76	50.27†	- 0.19	6.47
Far East Emg Eco	123.90	129.90	+ 0.30	0.48
Fixed Interest #	25.54	26.57†	+ 0.02	8.94
Fund Inv Tst	153.70	161.20		9.52
Japan	156.20	162.30	- 0.39	
Latin American	56.81	59.15	+ 0.07	0.82
Pacific	79.47	83.43	+ 0.14	0.31
Property Share	76.53	80.41	- 0.09	2.18
UK Emerging Cos	70.11	75.78	+ 0.04	1.27
UK Growth	56.06	58.39	- 0.17	2.01
Aber World Port #	81.43	83.07†	+ 0.09	3.00
Ethical	76.97	80.05†	+ 0.03	2.21
Aberdeen Gilt Inc #	50.21	50.26†	- 0.06	7.37
AIRWAYS UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0171 256 5888				
Bestch Property #	99.61	107.10		5.31
ALLCHURCHES INV MGMT SVS LTD				
01452 305 958				
Amity Income	94.00	99.74	- 0.01	2.27
Income Builder Inc	82.38	87.64†	+ 0.23	4.36
ALLIED DUNBAR UNIT TSTS PLC				
IFA dlg: 01793 610 366 Client dlg: 01793 514 514				
Balanced Trusts				
Growth & Income	294.80	315.10		2.95
Capital	520.80	556.70		1.13
Balanced	850.20	909.80†		2.29
Accumulation	1650.00	1763.00		1.77
Income Trusts				
American Income	64.05	68.230		2.34
High Income	474.90	507.60		4.20
Equity Income	269.50	288.00		3.86
High Yield	288.30	308.10		3.90
Govt Securities	34.70	36.620		5.98
International Trusts				
Amer Spec Sits	223.30	238.10		0.05
European Growth	53.13	56.630		0.07
International	184.70	197.30		0.11
Japan	169.70	181.40†		
Pacific	393.20	420.30†		
Secs of America	593.50	631.80†		0.12
Wwide Asset Val	55.32	59.130		0.02
Specialist Trusts				
Asset Value	660.60	706.10†		1.93
Cons & Gilt	51.73	55.290		3.83
Smaller Cos	205.50	219.60		1.04
2nd Smaller Cos	194.90	208.30		0.89
Recovery	174.10	186.10		1.52
Met Min & Cdty	158.30	169.20		0.18
Oseas Earnings	436.50	466.60†		1.04
Technology	218.70	233.70		
UK Special Sits	610.50	652.60		0.96
B & C E UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
01293 526 911				
Charity Out Pens	118.50	123.10	.	3.04
Founders Persl Pens	70.59	73.33	.	1.44
BSI-THORNHILL UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 800 0033				
Capital	87.80	93.40	+ 0.03	0.80
International	66.40	70.64	+ 0.02	
BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO LTD				
0131 222 4242				
America	356.80	380.20	+ 1.30	
Bond	120.80	126.20	+ 0.60	6.52
Brit Smlr Cos	117.30	124.80	- 0.10	1.79
Cons & Gen #	70.25	74.73†	+ 0.08	5.19
Europe	281.60	298.90†		0.40
Euro Smlr Cos	122.60	130.20†	- 0.10	0.59
Income Gwth	377.90	402.00†	+ 0.10	4.72
Japan	276.20	293.60	- 3.90	
Latin American	82.62	87.89	+ 0.21	0.76
Pacific	117.40	118.50†		1.03
UK Smlr Cos	58.40	62.13	+ 0.06	1.27
Japan Fd	560.90	567.80	- 6.30	.
Mngd Fd	205.40	218.00		2.74
BANK OF IRELAND FUND MGRS LTD				
0171 489 8673				
Brit & Oseas	375.90	397.60		0.89
Capital Gwth	133.40	141.10		3.04
Wwide Opps	221.80	234.60		0.94
BARCLAYS UNICORN LTD				
0181 522 4000				
Balanced Trusts				
Gwth & Inc Inc	442.40	470.68	+ 0.50	2.38
European Bd Inc	99.70	103.20	+ 0.10	6.73
Energy	86.51	92.03	+ 0.20	2.70
500	504.50	542.50	+ 0.60	2.32
General	336.60	359.20	+ 0.80	2.27
Property	247.80	265.90†		5.06
Trustee	234.00	249.00†	- 0.80	2.29
Income Trusts				
Cash Inc	101.00	101.00		5.53
[illegible] #	113.90	114.50†	+ 0.30	6.18
Extra Income #	141.30	151.10	+ 0.40	4.63
Gilt & Fxd Inc	59.25	61.09†	+ 0.34	7.75
Income #	609.40	651.80	+ 1.10	4.48
Income Builder #	70.68	75.31	- 0.11	5.17
[illegible]	71.54	76.11†	- 0.19	2.45
Growth Trusts - UK				
Capital	147.30	156.30	- 0.50	1.83
FTSE 100	104.70	110.60†	- 0.50	2.61
[illegible]	177.10	189.90	- 0.20	1.02
Recovery	509.70	545.10	- 3.10	2.51
Smaller Cos Inc	58.90	63.16	- 0.21	2.48
Special Sits	412.60	440.30	- 1.30	1.87
Growth Trusts - Overseas				
America	177.45	187.70†	- 0.70	0.32
Far East Gwth Acc	291.70	310.40	+ 3.40	0.25
Far East Gwth	173.10	184.19†	- 2.00	0.25

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
CAZENOVE UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
0171 606 0708				
Cazenove Portfolio	103.36	110.29	+ 0.08	1.82
American Portfolio	123.79	131.60†	- 1.10	1.02
European Portfolio	135.00	143.69	- 1.07	0.63
High Income	52.57	52.71	+ 0.25	7.45
Japanese Portfolio	57.07	60.53	- 1.11	.
Pacific Portfolio	155.49	167.20†	+ 0.63	1.08
UK Equity	99.09	105.83	+ 0.14	3.36
UK Equity & Bd	59.07	62.59	+ 0.19	6.11
UK Smlr Cos	51.94	55.56	+ 0.07	1.25
CENT BD OF FIN OF CHURCH OF ENG				
0171 588 1815				
Inv Fund	767.90	779.53		4.36
Fxd Int Sec	155.22	156.84		9.18
COIF CHARITY FUNDS				
0171 588 1815				
Investment Inc	770.14	781.78	...	4.32
Investment Acc	£36.50	£36.04		
Fixed Int Inc	127.98	128.50		9.03
Fixed Int Acc	233.07	234.01	.	
CITY FINANCIAL UT MGRS LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Bockman Intl	88.18	94.01		5.33
Beck Bio-Tech	43.32	47.11†		
Acorn Ethical Tst	189.24	189.72†		0.44
City Fin Assets	80.05	84.06		1.80
City Fin Intl	88.72	93.16†		0.14
Frans Hse Cap	316.69	336.80		2.50
Buckley Wrld Grth	135.87	144.02	.	
J Sal Inc/Gth Inc	57.82	60.72†	.	3.52
Shaw Utilities	61.50	63.04†	- 0.04	7.03
CITY OF LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0171 711 0771 Admin: 01277 227 300				
Emerging Markets	52.19	55.37	+ 0.43	
CLERICAL MEDICAL UT MGRS LTD				
0345 772 233				
American Gwth	80.21	85.33	+ 0.15	
Dragon Growth	71.14	76.08	+ 0.28	0.29
Equity High Inc	92.15	98.74†	+ 0.22	4.14
-do- Accum	134.24	143.85	+ 0.32	4.14
Extra Income Inc	26.99	28.42	+ 0.11	7.29
Extra Income Acc	29.70	31.27	+ 0.11	7.29
European Gwth	63.04	66.80	- 0.04	0.72
Evergreen	30.83	32.97	- 0.06	
General Equity	109.81	116.51	- 0.49	2.72
Japan Growth	39.80	42.34	- 0.63	
Pedigree Gwth	66.22	70.99	+ 0.13	2.27
Pnd Smr Cos Inc	37.70	40.54	+ 0.14	1.25
-do- Accum	40.19	43.21	+ 0.14	1.25
Retirement Inc #	28.00	30.26	+ 0.07	5.99
Special Sits	47.22	50.77	+ 0.16	2.36
UK & Overseas	59.53	63.16	- 0.11	0.56
COLONIAL UT MGRS LTD				
01634 898 000				
Balanced	72.28	75.29	+ 0.19	4.01
Capital	85.75	89.32	+ 0.18	2.56
High Income	52.60	54.79†	+ 0.35	6.63
Top 50	58.72	61.16	+ 0.16	2.50
COMMERCIAL UNION TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 686 9818				
PRESTIGE PORTFOLIO (PPT FUNDS)				
Income Funds				
Equity Inc	196.95	205.16	+ 0.41	4.48
Long Gilt	44.61	46.45	+ 0.34	6.02
Monthly Inc Plus	50.79	52.91	+ 0.27	8.47
Preference Share	48.12	50.13	+ 0.24	7.78
Balanced Funds				
High Yield	143.78	149.77	+ 0.37	5.70
Managed Fund	77.44	80.67	+ 0.05	2.75
UK Growth Funds				
Smaller Cos	53.31	55.53	+ 0.11	1.71
-do- Accum	63.01	65.64	+ 0.14	1.71
UK & General	100.58	104.77	+ 0.23	2.88
-do- Accum	132.34	137.85	+ 0.29	2.88
UK Growth	202.31	210.74	+ 0.43	1.33
International Growth Funds				
Europe Growth	207.74	216.40	+ 0.13	0.67
Far Eastern Gth	129.14	134.52	+ 0.08	0.02
Global Bond	76.16	79.33	+ 0.13	8.25
Japan Growth	96.03	100.03	- 1.11	
North Amer Gth	240.43	250.45	+ 0.06	
Oriental Growth	83.78	87.27	+ 0.41	0.27
Worldwide Growth	71.04	74.00	- 0.08	.
OTHER CU TRUSTS (NON PPT FUNDS)				
Deposit Fund	92.32	92.32	+ 0.01	5.21
Homesteader Fund	90.37	96.14	+ 0.07	1.57
Quilter Fund	157.35	167.39	+ 0.27	1.90
CONSISTENT UNIT TST MGMT CO LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Consistent UT	36.05	38.54		4.31
COOKE (HENRY) INV FUNDS LTD				
0800 526 358				
Growth	178.00	189.40	+ 0.10	2.72
Income	75.50	80.32	+ 0.03	4.91
European	75.13	79.93	- 0.04	0.82
Recovery	188.00	200.00	+ 0.60	2.61
CO-OP PENSION FDS UT MGRS LTD				
0171 283 9494				
Equity Dist	989.00	1004.40†		3.40
CREDIT SUISSE INV FDS (UK) LTD				
01277 690 370				
Fellowship Tst	112.00	119.10	- 0.10	1.15
Income #	290.10	308.60	+ 0.20	4.54
-do- Accum #	774.50	823.90	+ 0.60	4.54
Smaller Cos	234.70	249.60†	- 0.10	0.86
-do- Accum	292.40	311.00	- 0.10	0.86
Gilt Portfolio	104.00	110.60		1.28
High Inc Port #	84.28	89.65	+ 0.04	4.24
DIMENSIONAL TST MGMT LTD				
0171 470 1634				
Euro Small Cos	1600.40	1647.80†		..
Japan Small Cos	921.01	936.78†		0.01
UK Small Cos	2180.10	2277.30		2.90
US Small Cos	2183.00	2173.70†		0.86
DISCRETIONARY UNIT FUND MGRS				
0171 377 8819				
Disc Inc	229.20	241.30†		3.14
EAGLE STAR UNIT MGRS LTD				
01242 577 555				
UK Balanced Inc	176.90	188.10†	+ 0.10	1.72
UK High Inc Inc	184.00	195.70		3.64
-do- Accum	252.30	268.30		3.64
UK Pref & F I Inc	59.36	62.98†	.	5.87
Environmtl Opps	102.20	108.70	- 0.20	0.92
UK Smlr Cos #	70.28	74.76	- 0.37	1.07
Extra Income Inc	50.45	53.66	+ 0.11	7.58
EDINBURGH UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0345 080 526				
American	178.00	188.30	- 0.20	0.42
Convertibles #	22.83	24.26†	+ 0.03	5.77
Equity Income #	144.40	153.40†	+ 0.40	3.91
EuroFund	62.54	66.22	+ 0.01	0.80
Financial	57.50	61.09	+ 0.17	1.47
Growth & Inc #	295.90	314.40	+ 0.70	2.78
High Dist #	181.10	192.40†	+ 0.40	4.42
International	420.30	447.20	- 0.20	0.11
Inf Cap Inc	104.40	111.40	- 0.40	2.42
Latin American	30.30	32.19	+ 0.01	
Pacific	82.24	87.38	- 0.55	
Pref High Inc	22.82	24.26	+ 0.07	7.42
Tokyo	185.40	196.30	- 2.70	.
UK Smaller Cos	252.50	268.30	- 0.20	1.12
Dunedin Unit Trusts				
European Gwth	327.10	345.60	- 0.30	1.04
Jap Smlr Co	348.20	369.30	- 2.70	
Nth Amer	429.40	454.20	- 3.40	0.64
UK Inc & Gwth	252.70	276.00	+ 1.50	2.69
ELY PLACE UNIT MGRS LTD				
0171 242 0242				
Brit Director Dlgs	116.92	125.62		1.12
Growth Acc	257.53	275.06		1.11
Income	615.22	661.22		6.05
ENDURANCE FUND MGMT LTD				
0171 373 7261				
Endurance Fd	223.90	229.10		1.24
EQUITABLE UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
01296 431 480				
European	90.21	94.96		1.83
Ethical Tst	46.00	48.42		1.07
Far Eastern	290.25	305.54		1.61
High Income	143.61	151.17†		4.88
UK Index Trckng	53.04	55.83		3.17
Intl Growth	138.35	145.74		0.45
North American	149.51	157.38		1.68
Pelican	146.46	154.17		3.09
Smaller Cos	72.73	76.67†		2.82
Special Sits	59.98	64.72		1.16
Tst of Inv Tsts	215.19	226.52		1.31
EVERMORE FUND MGMT LTD				
0171 407 4966				
Smaller Cos Inc	234.04	246.58	+ 0.11	2.37
Smaller Cos Acc	[illegible]	449.64	+ 0.19	2.37
Recovery	[illegible]	65.97†	+ 0.23	2.25
Recovery Acc	60.71	64.59†	+ 0.25	2.25
EXETER FUND MANAGERS LTD				
01392 412 144				
Capital Growth	31.04	33.71		
Fd of Inv Tsts	[illegible]	55.70		0.52
High Income #	39.73	42.52		10.83
Warrant	43.32	47.13		
Zero Preference	44.48	47.53†		

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
FRAMLINGTON UNIT MGMT LTD				
Enq 0171 330 6500 Dealing 0345 775511				
American Growth	77.99	83.83	- 0.53	
-do- Accum	77.99	83.03	- 0.53	
Amer Smlr Cos	645.50	690.40	- 1.00	
-do- Accum	659.40	705.30	- 1.20	
Capital Tst	404.10	429.90	- 0.10	1.09
-do- Accum	593.70	631.80	- 0.20	1.09
Cont Smlr Cos	58.36	62.26	+ 0.02	1.31
-do- Accum	62.08	66.24	+ 0.02	1.31
Convertible	142.50	151.60†	- 0.10	5.10
-do- Accum	315.82	335.70†	- 0.20	5.10
Emerging Markets	60.79	64.95†	+ 1.22	0.30
-do- Accum	61.28	65.47†	+ 1.23	0.30
Europhil	148.60	157.60	- 0.20	0.50
-do- Accum	157.40	166.90	- 0.20	0.50
Extra Income	405.00	430.90	+ 3.30	4.45
-do- Accum	644.80	686.00	+ 5.10	4.45
Financial	175.90	187.10	+ 0.20	0.46
-do- Accum	186.90	198.80	+ 0.20	0.46
Gilt Trust	63.71	65.69	+ 0.11	6.65
-do- Accum	99.08	102.10	+ 0.20	6.65
Health Fund Inc	244.80	261.30†		
-do- Accum	244.60	261.30†		
Income & Growth	231.90	246.70†	- 0.50	3.61
-do- Accum	374.60	398.50†	- 0.80	3.61
Intl Growth	417.00	444.60	- 1.40	..
-do- Accum	463.10	493.80	- 1.30	
Japan & Gen	144.60	153.80	- 1.80	
-do- Accum	146.00	155.40	- 1.70	
Monthly Inc #	204.40	217.40†	- 0.20	4.38
-do- Accum #	205.60	218.70†	- 0.20	4.38
Managed Port Inc	120.90	127.30		1.41
-do- Accum	131.30	138.20		1.41
Quarterly Income #	57.56	61.67†	+ 0.04	5.28
-do- Accum #	66.71	71.49†	+ 0.06	5.28
Recovery	328.10	350.98	- 1.90	
-do- Accum	387.30	414.20	- 2.30	
UK Growth	69.27	73.69	+ 0.26	2
-do- Accum	75.11	79.90	+ 0.29	2
FRIENDS PROVIDENT UNIT TRUSTS				
Dealing 01722 715895 Enq 01722 715834				
FP American	62.15	66.25†	- 0.08	0.10
FP Am Smlr Cos	197.20	210.30†	- 1.40	.
FP Asian Growth	280.00	298.60	+ 1.30	.
FP Australian	414.30	441.90	- 0.70	
FP Equity Dist	470.20	501.50†	+ 1.30	2.46
-do- Accum	610.50	651.19	+ 2.00	2.46
FP Euro Gth	289.80	309.10	- 0.60	
-do- Accum	317.10	338.20	- 0.60	
FP Intl Bond	56.96	60.27	- 0.05	4.22
FP Intl Gth Dist	37.30	39.78†	- 0.07	
-do- Accum	54.78	58.43	- 0.09	
FP Pac Basin Acc	210.60	224.60†	- 0.50	
FP Income #	59.34	63.29†	+ 0.32	4.92
-do- Accum #	210.90	224.90	+ 1.20	4.92
FP Jap Smlr Cos	248.40	264.90	- 3.10	
FP Monthly Dist #	76.68	81.79†	+ 0.34	4.94
FP Stlg Deposit	100.90	100.90†		5.30
FP Tokyo	69.05	73.65	- 0.94	.
FP UK Focus	43.51	46.41†	+ 0.17	1.56
FP UK Growth	206.60	220.30	+ 1.00	2.20
-do- Accum	416.40	444.10	+ 2.10	2.20
Stewardship Dist	441.70	471.10†	+ 2.00	1.33
-do- Accum	558.10	595.30	+ 2.40	1.33
Stewdshp Inc Dist #	80.08	85.41†	+ 0.45	4.73
-do- Accum #	111.10	118.50	+ 0.60	4.73
N Am Stshp Dist	126.40	134.80	- 0.30	0.26
-do- Accum	135.80	144.80	- 0.40	0.26
FP Exempt Trust				
Inst Ethical In #	106.40	106.90	+ 0.30	3.50
Inst Ethical Ac #	106.40	106.90	+ 0.30	3.50
FP Managed Portfolio Service				
Capital Gwth Acc	127.70	135.80†	- 0.10	1.51
Open Cap Gth Acc	129.60	137.80†	.	0.18
Cap Gth Inc Inc #	118.80	126.30		3.20
Cap Gth Inc Acc #	125.80	133.80		3.20
Opn Cp Gth Ic Ic #	122.30	130.10		3.90
Opn Cp Gth Ic Ac #	130.70	139.00		3.90
GA UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0345 581 106/7				
GANDA	300.70	319.00†	+ 1.60	1.88
Cash	49.62	50.36†		4.80
Growth Portfolio	87.46	93.04	- 0.33	0.13
Income Portfolio	72.13	76.53†	- 0.17	2.98
GEM DOLPHIN INV MGRS LTD				
0171 236 8441				
Special Sits	219.80	235.10	- 0.20	0.32
Dividend	101.80	108.90	+ 0.30	4.26
Intl Gth & Inc	251.20	268.70		2.39
UK & Gen	51.67	55.26	+ 0.30	1.50
Fund of Funds	75.26	80.49	+ 0.13	
GT GLOBAL FUND MGMT LTD				
Inv 0800 212274 Dealing 0171 626 9431				
American Smlr Cos	228.80	244.70	- 1.90	0.14
European Gth	724.50	770.60	- 2.88	0.62
Euro Eq & Bd Inc	54.05	57.27	+ 0.02	5.27
-do- Accum	61.36	65.02	+ 0.03	5.27
Far East & Gen	263.70	282.10†	+ 0.20	
High Yield #	50.48	53.34	+ 0.30	7.85
-do- Accum #	56.54	59.74	+ 0.34	7.86
Income Inc	201.80	216.90	+ 0.10	3.98
-do- Accum	230.60	246.70	+ 0.10	3.98
Intl Growth	380.70	405.70	- 1.00	0.30
Intl Income	93.24	98.84†	- 0.24	2.76
Japan Growth	407.90	433.40		
Orient Acc	199.50	213.40	+ 1.30	0.14
UK General Inc	199.00	212.90	- 0.10	1.55
UK General Acc	356.80	380.40	- 0.20	1.55
UK Sm Cos Div Acc	59.84	64.00	- 0.21	1.81
UK Spec Sits	103.90	111.20	- 0.10	1.48
US Growth	186.80	198.40	- 0.60	
Wwide Spec Sits	164.00	174.60	- 0.60	
GARTMORE FUND MANAGERS				
0171 782 2000 Dlgs only 01277 264 421				
UK Growth Funds				
British Growth	82.71	88.97	+ 0.02	1.96
Cash Trust	147.68	147.68†	+ 0.02	5.28
Practical Inv Inc #	122.31	130.81	- 0.05	3.68
-do- Accum #	295.94	316.51	- 0.12	3.68
UK Index	185.19	186.12	+ 0.38	3.27
UK Smaller Cos	209.37	223.93	+ 0.44	0.17
Income Funds				
Extra Yield	24.55	25.85	+ 0.11	7.31

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Overseas Funds				
Asian Enterprise	195.04	208.56†	- 0.02	
European	610.02	647.38†	- 0.16	0.31
European Income #	95.22	100.93	+ 0.16	3.32
Euro Smlr Cos	192.84	206.01†	+ 0.89	0.5
European Value	93.03	99.45†	+ 0.58	0.13
-do- Accum	100.88	107.03	+ 0.63	0.13
Japan Trust	185.79	197.35	- 4.08	...
Japan Smlr Cos	186.45	197.49†	- 2.19	
Pacific Smlr Cos	222.39	243.31†	- 0.39	
North American	323.33	342.97	- 0.76	
American Smaller	171.42	183.23†	- 0.63	..
HIGH PEAK UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
Enquiries: 01277 227 300 Dealing: 01277 261 010				
Income & Growth #	163.60	172.30	+ 0.40	4.83
HILL SAMUEL UNIT TST MGRS				
0181 686 4355				
British	126.63	132.86	+ 0.40	1.80
Capital	205.93	215.63	- 0.01	1.42
Dollar	519.92	544.42	- 1.17	..
Enterprise Gth	443.17	464.05	+ 0.45	0.97
European	271.81	284.61	- 0.29	0.45
Far East	306.07	320.49†	- 0.36	0.14
Financial	£10.84	£11.36	+ 1.59	1.69
Gilt & Fxd Int Inc	26.56	27.62	+ 0.09	6.12
High Yield #	114.13	113.51†	+ 0.21	4.87
Income & Growth #	168.57	176.51	+ 0.33	3.61
International	286.72	300.23	- 0.89	0.28
Japanese General	174.52	182.75†	- 2.52	.
Japan Tech	76.13	79.72	- 0.83	
Ntr Resources	77.88	81.55	- 0.02	0.68
Portfolio	88.56	98.63	- 0.07	1.16
Special Sits	212.96	222.99	+ 0.98	0.10
UK Emerging Cos	131.54	137.74	+ 0.47	0.87
US Smaller Cos	162.07	169.71	- 0.24	...
HSBC UNIT TRUST MGMT LTD				
Advisers 0800 181 890 Investors 0800 289 505				
Active Funds-UK				
Income #	672.00	717.20	+ 1.40	5.27
UK Growth	736.00	785.50	+ 2.80	2.46
High Income #	118.20	126.20†	+ 0.20	5.44
Active Funds-International				
American Gwth	635.80	673.10	- 0.80	0.24
European Gwth	145.70	154.90†		0.15
Japan Gwth	232.50	247.30	- 3.90	
Japan Smlr Cos	27.96	29.82	- 0.25	
Asian	62.91	67.14†	+ 0.21	0.09
Sing & Malay Gwth	84.28	89.95	+ 0.88	
Hong Kong Gwth	165.20	176.30	+ 0.90	1.00
Global Bond	21.45	22.65	+ 0.03	4.86
Index Funds-UK				
UK Index	175.10	176.00	+ 0.30	3.16
Trans Index	130.90	134.20	+ 0.20	2.10
THE FOOTSIE FUND	67.61	67.95†	+ 0.13	2.85
Index Funds-International				
American Index	294.10	295.60	- 0.20	0.91
Eurotrack 100	199.00	200.00	- 0.40	1.46
Japan Index	64.85	65.18	- 1.22	0.11
Tiger Index	187.30	188.20	+ 0.70	0.15
INVESCO FUND MANAGERS LTD				
0171 626 3434 Dealing: 0800 010 733				
UK Specialist Trusts				
UK Smaller Cos	50.59	52.67	+ 0.17	1.38
General Funds				
Managed Dist	89.46	93.14†	+ 0.50	1.42
Managed	92.38	96.07†	+ 0.51	1.42
Rupert Child Fnd	107.10	111.50	+ 0.20	2.01
UK Growth	73.97	76.91†	+ 0.14	1.77
High Income Funds				
UK Extra Inc #	91.87	95.65	+ 0.31	5.30
Gilt & Fixed Int #	26.82	27.63‡	+ 0.12	7.99
UK Inc & Gwth	50.04	52.10	+ 0.10	2.92
UK Income #	389.60	405.60	+ 1.20	4.17
Overseas Growth Funds				
American Growth	64.77	66.46	- 0.28	0.11
Amer Smlr Cos	154.80	161.20	- 1.70	.
-do- Accum	156.40	162.80	- 1.80	
Europe Gth	235.60	244.90	- 0.30	..
-do- Accum	244.30	253.60	- 0.30	
Euro Smaller Cos	45.15	45.95	- 0.02	
French Growth	97.67	101.40	- 0.30	0.08
-do- Accum	105.60	109.60	- 0.30	0.08
H Kong & China	106.30	110.50	+ 0.60	0.46
Intl Growth	67.52	70.25	- 0.24	0.06
-do- Accum	68.79	71.58	- 0.25	0.06
Japan Gth	25.68	26.71	- 0.51	...
-do- Accum	25.68	26.71	- 0.51	
Japan Smaller Cos	31.24	32.49	- 0.33	.
Glob Emg Mkts	88.77	92.47	+ 0.05	
-do- Accum	89.40	93.08	+ 0.06	0.11
SE Asia	345.50	359.70	+ 2.80	0.17
Overseas Income Funds				
Intl Bond #	51.03	52.61†	+ 0.13	6.05
JOHNSON FRY UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
Enq 01277 227300 Dealing 01277 690446				
Sector Value Inc #	107.40	113.40	+ 0.30	3.63
Sector Value Gwth	109.30	115.10	+ 0.30	1.98
Hy 5 Europe	101.10	106.10†	+ 0.40	2.38
Slater Gwth	184.70	194.90	+ 1.50	0.46
New Japan	85.26	89.91	- 0.87	
JUPITER UT MGRS LTD				
0171 581 3020				
World Health	192.70	204.50	- 0.40	
Income #	225.24	239.61	+ 0.45	4.28
UK Growth	89.86	94.53	+ 0.23	1.51

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
-do- Accum	87.34	92.92	- 1.48	
Master Trust	68.74	73.13	+ 0.11	1.48
-do- Accum	79.37	84.44	+ 0.12	1.40
Millennium Acc	98.94	104.30	+ 1.10	2.29
N American Gen	253.60	269.88	- 2.70	
-do- Accum	293.60	312.30	- 3.10	
NAm Sm Co Rec	192.00	204.30	- 3.58	.
-do- Accum	196.00	208.60	- 3.50	...
Pacific Basin	254.70	267.80	- 0.58	0.05
-do- Accum	288.10	305.30	- 0.50	0.05
Small Cos Rec	532.20	560.80	+ 1.60	1.78
-do- Accum	735.20	773.90	+ 2.20	1.78
UK Eq Gth	170.30	181.20	+ 0.70	2.50
UK Eq Inc	133.70	142.30	+ 0.40	3.75
UK Growth	108.80	116.00	- 0.80	1.86
-do- Accum	136.70	145.50	- 1.10	1.86
Worldwide Gth	346.90	369.10	- 1.50	0.36
-do- Accum	512.70	545.50	- 2.10	0.36
LONDON & MANCHESTER TST MGMT				
01392 282 673				
American	80.85	85.11	- 0.35	0.70
General	111.06	119.16†	+ 0.47	2.90
Income	75.35	80.84	+ 0.36	5.80
International	71.97	77.22	- 0.29	0.50
Japan	47.41	50.87	- 0.80	..
Tst of Inv Trusts	75.76	81.28	- 0.10	1.00
M & G SECURITIES				
Cust Svcs/Unit Dlg: 01245 390 390				
Amer & General	528.20	557.90	- 0.60	0.31
-do- Accum	661.10	698.40	- 0.70	0.31
Amer Recovery	604.60	639.40	- 1.40	0.09
-do- Accum	690.20	730.50	- 1.60	0.09
Amer Smlr Cos	164.70	174.20	- 0.40	...
-do- Accum	168.30	178.00	- 0.40	...
Australasian	219.10	231.70	+ 1.70	1.99
-do- Accum	275.10	291.00	+ 2.10	1.99
Capital	992.20	1049.20	+ 0.60	2.86
-do- Accum	1184.70	1252.70	+ 0.60	2.86
Charifund	794.00	802.00	+ 1.90	5.68
-do- Accum	4148.60	4190.10	+ 9.80	5.68
Commodity	471.90	499.00	+ 2.80	0.23
-do- Accum	697.80	737.90	+ 4.10	0.23
Compound Gth	1140.80	1206.20	+ 2.60	2.74
-do- Accum	1260.00	1332.40	+ 2.80	2.74
Corporate Bond	25.93	26.02†	+ 0.18	7.40
Dividend	45.10	47.70†	+ 0.10	4.71
-do- Accum	204.50	216.60†	+ 0.70	4.71
Equity Income	342.90	362.60	+ 4.20	5.59
-do- Accum	475.60	502.90	+ 5.30	5.59
Euro & General	623.90	659.80†		0.70
-do- Accum	801.30	847.50†	+ 0.10	0.70
Euro Dividend	82.50	87.20	+ 0.20	3.51
-do- Accum	105.80	110.90	+ 0.10	3.51
Euro Smlr Cos	50.70	53.50	- 0.10	0.50
-do- Accum	50.70	53.50	- 0.10	0.50
Extra Yield	479.00	506.50	+ 1.10	4.89
-do- Accum	1620.00	1713.20	+ 3.70	4.89
Fund of Inv Tsts	715.10	756.20†	- 0.30	1.89
-do- Accum	1381.40	1460.80†	- 0.60	1.89
General	70.80	74.90†	+ 0.20	3.79
-do- Accum	212.60	224.90†	+ 0.60	3.79
Gilt Income	62.87	62.96†	+ 0.44	6.90
-do- Accum	193.39	193.68†	+ 1.38	6.90
Gold	69.60	73.60	+ 0.10	0.32
-do- Accum	82.60	87.40	+ 0.20	0.32
High Income	33.90	35.80†	+ 0.10	4.70
-do- Accum	147.40	155.70†	+ 0.30	4.70
Intl Growth	88.70	93.80	- 0.30	0.66
-do- Accum	157.00	166.00	- 0.60	0.66
International Inc	110.90	117.30	+ 0.10	4.51
-do- Accum	178.60	189.30	+ 0.20	4.51
Japan & Gen	33.90	35.80†	- 0.40	
-do- Accum	36.40	38.40†	- 0.50	
Japan Smlr Cos	121.70	128.70	- 1.40	
-do- Accum	122.50	129.60	- 1.40	
Managed Gwth	27.10	28.60		1.67
Managed Income	29.40	31.90	+ 0.10	4.14
Midland	62.60	66.20	+ 0.70	3.19
-do- Accum	220.70	233.40	+ 2.60	3.19
Pension Ex	1093.60	1121.00	+ 2.30	4.22
Recovery	48.10	50.90†	+ 0.60	3.01
-do- Accum	83.60	88.40†	+ 1.10	3.01
Second General	75.80	80.20†	+ 0.40	3.97
-do- Accum	209.50	221.60†	+ 0.90	3.97
Smaller Cos	68.30	72.20	+ 0.20	3.58
-do- Accum	141.50	149.50	+ 0.40	3.58
Sth East Asia	393.50	416.10	+ 1.10	1.12
-do- Accum	527.00	557.30	+ 1.40	1.12
Treasury	25.06	25.12†		5.83
Trustee	44.10	46.60	+ 0.10	5.27
-do- Accum	192.70	203.80	+ 0.40	5.27
MEM UNIT MANAGERS LTD				
Dealing: 01277 261 010 Enq: 01903 204 631				
European Growth	99.37	105.71	.	0.86
Intl Bond	62.49	65.65‡		5.07
Intl Equity Growth	84.83	90.17‡	.	0.67
N Amer Growth	141.13	149.98		0.73
Special Sits Growth	28.86	30.70		2.30
UK Growth	475.96	506.34	..	2.71
-do- Accum	657.25	699.20	.	2.71
MW JOINT INVESTORS LTD				
01620 825867				
Balanced Fd #	1424.90	1446.30†		2.90
Income #	1845.70	1861.70	..	4.00
MALDON UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0131 222 4242				
Maldon General	165.30	169.00†	.	3.58

The BUILDING SOCIETY
BONANZA

£100 turned into £500 within 2 years by the windfall bonuses of Cheltenham & Gloucester, Bristol & West and National & Provincial Building Society.

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- WHERE NEXT ?
- TOP TIPS
- HOW TO BENEFIT
- WHAT IS LEFT ?

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Issued by
Hargreaves Lansdown Asset Management Limited
Kendal House, 4 Brighton Mews Clifton Bristol BS8 2NX

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Intl Growth	[illegible]	88.47	- 0.49	0.45
Ecology	100.79	107.22	+ 0.37	0.97
European	[illegible]	230.49	- 0.45	0.56
Far Eastern	291.30	313.50	- 1.70	.
UK Special Sits	56.70	60.43	+ 0.36	
KLEINWORT BENSON UNIT TRUSTS				
Dealers: 0171 956 7364				
Income Trusts				
Bond Income	101.45	104.70†	+ 0.40	7.11
Euro Pfce Inc	121.32	123.32		2.75
-do- Accum	127.95	133.33		2.75
Gilt Yield	119.45	125.92†	+ 0.50	6.42
Global Income	332.90	347.90†	+ 1.30	3.57
High Yield	167.30	177.30	+ 0.40	5.44
-do- Accum	[illegible]	567.60	+ 1.20	5.44
Money Market	93.20	93.20†	+ 0.01	5.58
Smllr Cos Gth	61.50	65.55†	+ 0.14	3.45

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
MARKS & SPENCER UNIT TRUST LTD				
0800 363432				
M & S Inv Ptflo	181.80	187.40	+ 0.20	2.47
-do- Accum	216.80	222.50	+ 0.30	2.47
UK Sel Ptflo	162.40	167.40†	+ 0.10	2.50
-do- Accum	197.70	203.90†	+ 0.20	2.50
UK 100 Cos	121.00	121.80	+ 0.30	2.79
-do- Accum	123.20	123.30	+ 0.20	2.79
MARLBOROUGH FUND MGRS LTD				
01204 364 942				
Managed Tst	72.49	77.12		3.55
MARTIN CURRIE UNIT TRUSTS LTD				
0131 479 4646				
Intl Income	84.29	89.42†	- 0.31	3.43
European	105.50	112.00		0.65
Income #	95.91	97.20†	+ 0.57	4.08
Nth American	99.69	105.90	- 0.10	0.15

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Gilt & Fixed	102.00	108.10	+ 0.40	5.13
Income	107.80	114.50	+ 0.38	2.23
Japan Growth	42.59	45.15	- 0.12	...
Managed	85.10	90.53	+ 0.06	1.94
Money Market	96.52	102.30		3.93
North American	113.08	118.80	+ 0.10	0.37
Midland PSAVCS Unit Trust				
British	125.70	133.70	+ 0.30	1.32
European Growth	125.10	132.60	+ 1.30	0.01
Gilt & Fixed Int	96.18	101.90	+ 0.40	5.16
Income	105.50	112.20	+ 0.39	2.23
Japan Growth	42.48	45.01	- 0.11	.
Managed	81.86	87.08	+ 0.65	1.91
Money Market	88.96	94.30	+ 0.01	3.90
North American	101.90	108.00	+ 0.10	0.45
Midland Executive Pension Unit Trust				
British	124.50	132.50	+ 0.30	1.32
European Growth	122.58	129.80	+ 1.30	
Gilt & Fixed Int	86.10	91.32	+ 0.41	5.40
Income	102.30	108.80	+ 0.20	2.35
Japan Growth	43.40	46.08	- 0.12	
Managed	84.32	89.70	+ 0.68	1.93
Money Market	80.76	85.61	...	4.07
North American	114.20	121.00	+ 0.10	0.35
MORGAN GRENFELL INVEST FDS LTD				
Dealers: 0171 588 7474 Enquiries: 0171 588 7171				
American Gwth	476.70	506.00†	- 2.30	.
European Gth Inc	555.80	585.40†	- 2.90	..
-do- Accum	561.90	601.90†	- 2.80	...
Intl Gwth	225.60	239.70†	- 1.50	.
UK Equity Inc	228.60	243.30	+ 0.20	3.77
-do- Accum	312.00	332.00	+ 0.30	3.77
UK Ind Trckr Inc	201.00	214.50	+ 0.30	3.01
-do- Accum	248.70	265.40	+ 0.40	3.01
US Eq Ind Trk Inc	285.00	301.70	- 0.40	0.77
Japan Tracker	60.72	64.03†	- 1.28	.
Asian Tracker	225.30	243.10	+ 0.80	0.15
Mngd Ptflo Inc	189.40	202.09†	- 0.38	1.96
Mngd Ptflo Acc	207.70	221.50†	- 0.40	1.96
Deposit Inc	100.12	100.12†	+ 0.03	5.24
Europa	254.20	273.00	- 0.20	.
Genesis	215.90	233.10†	+ 0.80	2.41
High Income	20.98	22.25	+ 0.03	10.00
MURRAY JOHNSTONE UT MGMT				
0345 080 933				
Acumen	110.60	113.00	+ 0.20	1.75
Acumen Inc	109.30	112.50	+ 0.30	1.75
Acumen Reserve	97.25	98.23	+ 0.44	8.95
-do- Inc	75.83	75.76	+ 0.38	8.95
American Growth	69.87	71.56	+ 0.17	.
Equity Income #	107.20	110.00†	+ 0.50	4.32
European	82.56	83.96	+ 0.07	0.43
Smaller Cos	92.90	97.26†	- 0.07	1.17
W'wide Eqty	78.65	78.38	- 1.19	.
Global Bond	42.74	43.20†	- 0.09	5.35
UK Growth	118.10	121.40	+ 0.50	1.31
Pacific Growth	120.70	124.49	- 0.39	0.49
Japan Growth	83.55	84.92	- 1.22	..
NFU MUTUAL UNIT MGRS LTD				
Enquiries: 01277 227 300 Dealing: 01277 261 010				
Avon Equity	154.52	164.38	+ 0.31	2.57
N&P UNIT TRUST MANAGEMENT LTD				
0161 839 8262				
UK Growth	93.45	99.42	+ 0.19	2.09
UK Income	130.57	138.90†	+ 0.15	4.24
Higher Income	249.80	265.70†	+ 0.52	4.30
Smaller Cos	106.60	113.40	- 0.10	1.42
International	111.48	118.59	- 0.87	1.42
NPI INVESTMENT MGRS				
0171 623 4500				
Americas Dist	132.40	140.80†	- 0.30	0.08
European Dist	149.30	158.90†	- 0.10	0.27
Far East Dist	180.20	191.70	- 0.50	.
Global Care Dist	86.33	91.84†	+ 0.10	0.36
Oseas Dist	1126.00	1197.90	- 4.10	.
-do- Accum	1463.60	1557.00	- 5.30	.
UK Dist	441.80	470.00†	+ 1.00	1.83
-do- Accum	906.80	964.70	+ 2.00	1.83
UK Extra Inc Dist	98.34	104.62	+ 0.30	2.90
Wwide Dist	115.20	123.60	- 0.70	...
Wwide Inc Dist	88.12	93.74	- 0.20	1.38
NATWEST UNIT TRUST MANAGERS LTD				
Dlg: 01277 690 290 Admin Enq: 01277 690 390				
Europe Inc	80.58	85.04	- 0.05	0.71
Fund of Funds Inc	69.80	73.75†	+ 0.07	1.78
North America Inc	68.73	73.07	+ 0.16	0.34
UK Equity Gth Inc	71.36	75.31†	..	2.68
-do- Accum	77.75	82.06	.	2.68
UK General Inc	69.63	73.49	+ 0.15	2.78
UK Gilt/Fix Int Inc	48.57	51.18	- 0.19	5.45
UK Income Inc	68.54	72.34†	+ 0.11	4.12
NEWTON FUND MGRS LTD				
Enquiries: 0800 614 330 Dealing: 0500 440 000				
American	53.86	57.29	+ 0.02	..
-do- Accum	54.28	57.74	+ 0.02	.
Bond	126.60	134.42†	+ 0.43	5.27
Cash Income	50.31	50.31†	+ 0.01	5.25
-do- Accum	68.72	68.72†	+ 0.01	5.25
Distribution	105.82	112.57†	- 1.24	3.96
European	58.33	59.92	- 0.05	...
Foundation	111.03	118.11	- 1.62	2.78
General Inc	219.97	234.01	+ 0.04	1.68
General Acc	222.17	236.35	+ 0.04	1.68
Global	377.31	401.39	+ 0.81	
Growth Inc	145.62	154.91	+ 0.06	2.28
Growth Acc	149.47	158.94	+ 0.06	2.28
Higher Income Inc	33.21	35.32	- 0.30	4.49
-do- Accum	40.46	43.04	- 0.35	4.49
Income	272.76	290.17	+ 0.28	3.38
Intrepid	141.54	147.49		1.79
Japan	24.05	25.58	- 0.42	...
Oriental Inc	144.74	153.97	+ 0.51	0.23
-do- Accum	149.92	159.48	+ 0.53	0.23
Pers Int Gwth	36.42	38.74	+ 0.09	.
NORTHERN ROCK UNIT TRUST LTD				
0191 285 2555				
High Income #	49.96	52.87	+ 0.28	8.07
UK Growth	118.00	124.90	+ 3.30	2.80

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Special Sits	152.90	162.70†	+ 0.40	1.45
-do- Accum	170.60	181.50	+ 0.50	1.45
Technology	684.30	727.90	- 7.30	
UK Blue Chip	91.83	97.69	...	3.10
-do- Accum	107.50	114.40	...	3.10
PRUDENTIAL UNIT TRUSTS LTD				
0181 478 3377 Client Enq: 0171 911 4490				
Managed Tst	46.03	47.70	- 0.04	1.64
Cash Haven Inc	101.31	101.88†	+ 0.01	4.79
Cash Haven Acc	119.89	120.48	+ 0.02	4.79
Dist Trust Inc	108.93	112.88	- 0.30	5.49
Dist Trust Acc	123.54	128.02	+ 1.15	5.49
Global Growth	108.82	113.64	- 0.07	1.17
Equity Inc	91.74	97.60†	+ 0.11	4.52
Equity	912.31	970.54	+ 1.72	2.33
European	273.22	283.13†	+ 0.08	0.81
High Income	95.17	101.24†	+ 0.20	5.00
Intl Gth	221.57	235.71	- 0.25	0.06
Intl Sm Co	95.66	101.77	- 0.11	0.47
Japanese	179.21	185.71	- 3.14	...
Nth Amer	245.21	254.03†	+ 0.51	1.28
Pacific Mkts	116.41	120.63	+ 0.25	0.52
Premier Inc	48.73	50.71	+ 0.10	0.55
Sm Cos	112.00	119.15	+ 0.03	1.78
Spec Sits	131.39	139.99†	+ 0.36	2.08
UK Growth	153.92	163.74	+ 0.28	2.33
QUILTER FUND MANAGEMENT LTD				
0171 407 5966				
Hi Inc Inv Inc	85.49	90.95	- 0.03	3.77
Investment Trust	115.81	121.78	+ 0.04	0.62
UK Smaller Cos	108.36	114.99	+ 0.92	1.18
RELIANCE UNIT MGRS LTD				
01892 510 033				
British Life	349.50	370.70	+ 1.30	3.10
ROTHSCHILD FUND MANAGEMENT				
Dealers: 0171 623 1000				
Five Arrows Funds				
America (Inc)	681.96	724.37	- 3.25	0.16
America (Acc)	799.08	848.74	- 3.81	0.16
Amer Smlr Cos	62.82	67.01	+ 0.11	...
Asia	53.80	57.91	- 0.05	...
European	417.79	442.67	- 0.84	0.38
Japan	195.52	207.87	- 4.50	..
Jap Smlr Cos	33.91	38.20	- 0.10	
Major UK Cos	123.85	132.10†	+ 0.65	1.63
Smlr UK Cos	417.80	454.76	+ 2.43	1.08
UK Equity Inc #	199.83	204.02†	+ 1.02	4.29
Five Arrows Portfolio Fund				
Asia Pacific	51.08	53.34†	+ 0.03	...
Cash	48.07	50.07†	+ 0.01	2.84
Emerging Mkts	45.74	47.77†	- 0.07	.
Europe	62.26	65.02†	- 0.33	.
Global Fixed Int #	49.58	51.78†	- 0.09	5.31
Japan	36.14	37.74†	- 0.44	..
North America	69.17	72.23†	- 0.24	.
UK	67.76	70.76†	+ 0.18	0.48
UK Equity Inc #	63.14	65.94†	+ 0.18	3.58
UK Fixed Int #	51.09	53.29†	+ 0.10	7.20
Portfolio Service PEP				
Pep Gwth Port	51.57	53.44	- 0.04	.
Pep Inc Port #	51.76	53.63	+ 0.08	4.24
RAM Personal Pension				
Deposit	91.19	95.99	+ 0.01	
Gilt	104.07	109.54	+ 0.57	..
Managed	119.13	125.40	- 1.45	.
Portfolio	50.89	53.67	.	..
ROYAL LIFE FD MGMT LTD				
Prices: 01733 282 826 Gen Enq: 01733 390 000				
United States	122.90	130.70	- 0.50	0.32
Pacific Basin	78.00	83.72	- 0.17	0.31
High Inc Dist	166.80	178.20	+ 0.70	1.68
Ryl Life Intl Ctry	64.74	68.38	+ 0.08	3.83
Ryl Life Intl Gwth	76.82	81.84	- 0.41	0.08
Ryl Life Intl Spec	70.73	75.24	- 0.29	.
UK Emerging Cos	143.00	154.50	+ 0.30	1.34
UK Index Trckg	205.10	218.00	+ 0.50	3.42
European	172.58	184.83	- 1.08	0.18
Managed	182.80	196.50		1.01
ROYAL LONDON UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
01206 764 400				
American Growth	195.30	208.60	- 0.80	1.17
European Growth	138.30	146.60	- 0.40	1.91
Far East Growth	145.40	154.70	+ 0.60	0.80
Japan Growth	108.80	115.60	- 0.30	...
Special Sits	258.10	274.50	+ 1.70	1.79
UK Growth	106.10	112.80†	+ 0.30	2.78
Intl Growth	281.70	299.70	- 0.30	1.71
ST JAMES'S PLACE UT GROUP LTD				
0141 387 6500				
Far East Inc	170.60	180.50	..	0.56
Gt Euro Prog Inc	435.50	460.80		0.76
-do- Accum	683.30	723.10		0.76
Growth Inc	155.30	164.20		0.96
-do- Accum	159.50	168.80		0.96
International Inc	408.60	429.60	..	0.90
-do- Accum	561.70	594.40	..	0.90
Nth Am & Intl Inc	402.00	425.40	..	0.04
UK Gen Prog Inc	263.90	278.30	.	1.12
-do- Accum	302.20	319.80	..	1.12
UK High Inc Inc	155.60	164.70	..	4.46
SANWA INTL INVEST SERVICES LTD				
0171 380 0572				
Asian Gwth	127.74	135.89	+ 0.17	0.75
European Gwth	92.10	97.97†	+ 0.02	1.00
Global Bd	60.93	64.33	+ 0.08	5.00
Japan	45.33	48.28	- 0.53	.
UK Gwth	93.02	98.96‡	+ 0.24	1.75
SAVE & PROSPER GROUP				
Clients: 0800 829 100 Brokerline: 0800 727 770				
Amer Smlr Cos	150.50	160.10	- 1.00	
Cash	136.30	136.30†	..	5.99
China Dragon	70.77	75.29	- 0.08	1.28
Commodity	144.10	153.30	- 0.20	

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
Intl Growth Inc	225.30	239.70†	- 0.50	0.26
Wwide Venture Inc	91.22	97.05	- 0.31	0.45
SCOTTISH WIDOWS' FUND MGMT				
0131 655 3724				
Equity Inc	463.80	494.70	+ 1.10	2.45
-do- Accum	711.60	759.00	+ 1.70	2.45
UK High Inc	222.00	236.80	+ 0.50	2.61
-do- Accum	344.50	367.40	+ 0.80	2.61
Europe Inc	469.40	500.60	- 2.30	0.38
Nth Amer Inc	326.30	348.00	- 3.20	
Global Inc	249.80	266.20	- 0.90	0.09
Global Acc	270.00	288.00	- 1.00	0.09
UK Spec Sits Inc	135.90	144.90	+ 0.40	1.65
Basin East Asia	221.10	235.80	- 0.20	0.19
Cash Trust Inc	100.20	100.20		5.23
UK Smlr Cos Inc	125.60	137.90	- 0.10	2.00
-do- Accum	132.00	140.80	- 0.10	2.00
Intl Bond Inc	90.75	96.34	- 0.30	5.16
SHARP (ALBERT E)				
Enquiries: 01277 227 300 Dealing: 01277 261 010				
European	160.70	169.70	- 0.20	0.63
Nth American	145.30	152.90	- 0.90	
Intl Bond & Conv	127.58	134.20†	+ 0.40	6.58
Pooled Pension (£)	234.38	251.80†		225.00
Smaller Cos	118.98	125.20†	+ 0.50	0.93
UK General #	170.90	179.90†	+ 0.90	2.05
Far Eastern	88.17	92.81	- 0.30	
SINGER & FRIEDLANDER INVESTMENT FUNDS LTD				
0171 628 6226				
UK Equity Inc ‡	104.74	...	+ 0.11	4.92
Sterling Reserve ‡	101.51	..	+ 0.02	4.76
Preferred Income ‡	103.08	..	+ 0.28	5.24
Tai Pan ‡	109.52	.	+ 0.30	
Aztec ‡	64.45	.	+ 0.17	...
Amer Gth Fund ‡	128.68	..	- 0.55	
European ‡	164.44	.	- 0.89	.
Global Bond ‡	87.51		+ 0.28	7.67
Seasonal ‡	90.62		- 0.32	
UK Growth ‡	111.63	..	+ 0.24	2.57
UK Emerg Leaders ‡	107.47		+ 0.25	2.62
Investment Trust ‡	111.24	..	- 0.16	1.51
Roll Up ‡	96.42			
Glob Gwth PEP	78.34	83.33	- 0.08	1.18
Inv Trust PEP	58.33	62.05	- 0.04	2.48
Pfd Inc PEP #	105.90	112.60	+ 1.20	5.93
SMITH & WILLIAMSON UT MGRS				
0171 637 5377				
American	435.90	467.20†	- 4.70	
Capital	145.90	156.00	+ 0.26	1.28
Cash	101.16	101.16	+ 0.04	5.41
European	163.40	172.98†	- 1.00	0.76
Far Eastern	152.20	161.00	+ 0.10	
Growth	171.50	181.50	+ 0.70	1.86
Income #	143.30	151.60	+ 0.30	4.95
Magnum	153.70	164.40†	+ 0.30	1.35
Smlr Secs	556.10	588.40	+ 0.90	0.37
Thoroughbred	179.40	192.00	+ 0.40	1.24
SOVEREIGN UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
01202 298 422				
Capital Prudence	58.40	62.42	+ 0.09	7.00
Ethical	82.00	87.70	- 0.15	0.92
European Growth	81.95	86.90	- 0.15	0.44
Income	62.92	67.29†	+ 0.19	3.37
Intl Growth	109.90	116.40	- 0.40	0.07
Managed	93.29	98.87	- 0.20	0.58
UK Growth	79.26	84.77	+ 0.11	1.33
STANDARD LIFE UNIT TRUSTS				
0800 33 33 53				
Standard Life Fund Mngmt Ltd				
Global Advtg Inc	46.88	47.12		1.19
Global Advtg Acc	51.10	51.36		1.19
Income Advtg Inc	36.77	36.96†	..	2.70
Income Advtg Acc	43.25	49.47		2.70
UK Equity Gth Acc	107.00	113.50	+ 0.30	3.84
Premier Inc Inc	49.24	51.83†	+ 0.20	7.10
Premier Inc Acc	53.53	56.35	+ 0.20	7.10
Managed Acc	65.15	69.05	+ 0.20	1.59
UK Eq Hi Inc Inc	42.44	44.99	+ 0.10	3.75
UK Eq Hi Inc Acc	56.57	59.97	+ 0.10	3.75
Standard Life Tst Mngmt Ltd				
UK Equity Gen Acc	61.72	65.83	+ 0.20	1.65
UK Equity Gen Inc	58.51	62.17	+ 0.20	1.65
Gilt & Fxd Int Inc	31.84	33.58	+ 0.10	6.41
Oseas Lrg Co Acc	354.20	384.40	- 1.70	1.44
Nth American Acc	58.25	61.90	- 0.40	
Pacific Basin	44.71	47.57		0.26
European Acc	59.52	63.24	- 0.20	0.27
Japan Acc	23.88	25.38	- 0.10	.
STATE STREET UT MGMT LTD				
0171 344 7000				
Global A (US$)	4.677	4.961		1.82
US Eqts (US$)	3.539	3.752	.	0.77
Far East Eqts (yen)	255.20	271.00		.
FT Europe	151.50	160.90†		1.21
FT N Amer (US$)	2.730	2.893		.
FT Japan (yen)	216.80	228.60		..
FT Asia Ex Jap (US$)	3.019	3.207†		0.99
STEWART IVORY UNIT TST MGRS LTD				
0131 226 3271				
American	531.80	563.00	- 4.30	
British #	1330.60	1407.80	+ 3.30	2.96
Emerging Mkts	157.80	168.10	+ 0.50	0.79
Euro Small Co	61.28	65.26	- 0.14	0.62
Japan	111.30	118.10	- 0.90	.
New Pacific	442.50	471.30	+ 0.90	1.11
-do- Accum	476.10	507.10	+ 0.90	1.11
Inv Trust Acc	308.40	318.50	+ 0.40	1.22
Mngd Equity	208.30	220.40	.	1.89
Mngd Cash	96.26	96.26	+ 0.01	5.30
SUN ALLIANCE UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
Enquiries: 01277 227 300 Dealing: 01277 690 399				
Equity	1121.00	1198.00	+ 2.00	1.53
North America	200.40	214.30	- 0.10	0.04
Far East	162.50	173.70	+ 1.70	0.27
Wwide Bond	59.95	60.43	+ 0.11	5.51
European	145.10	155.10	+ 0.10	0.21
Equity Income #	111.60	119.30†	+ 0.20	4.73
Portfolio	113.00	120.80	+ 0.10	1.27
UK Leading Cos	81.85	87.30	+ 0.19	2.36
High Inc Bond	50.29	50.37‡	+ 0.01	6.73
Broker Trusts				
Intel Equity	75.50	80.75	+ 0.08	

	Sell	Buy	+/-	Yld %
WHITTINGDALE UNIT TST MGMT LTD				
0171 623 2444				
Challenger	89.73	92.61	+ 0.22	2.90
Short Dtd Gilt	125.60	127.20	+ 0.10	
US Govt Bd (US$)	0.7882	0.7984		
Gilt Income	51.51	53.60	+ 0.13	6.40
Gilt Growth	78.50	81.60	+ 0.29	
Sterling Bond	49.33	51.15	+ 0.17	6.60
WOOLWICH UNIT TRUST MGRS LTD				
0181 298 4000				
Intl Mgd	55.96	59.43		1.97
UK Stockmarket	106.50	113.20	+ 0.10	2.43
Corporate Bd Inc	49.27	49.40		6.60
Do Accum	58.65	58.98		6.60

Source: FT Information

* Yield expressed as CAR (Compound Annual Return)
† Ex dividend. ‡ Middle price. . No significant data.
# Periodic Charge deducted from capital. @ Exit Charge.

Festive run gives the index its fifth gain in as many days

STOCK MARKET MICHAEL CLARK

THE London stock market continued rewriting the record book on Christmas Eve with share prices ending the shortened session at another new closing high.

It was the fifth consecutive day of gains for the FT-SE 100 index, which closed just a shade below its best of the day with a rise of 5.3 at 4,092.5, stretching the rise over five days to 112.9.

Turnover reflected the shortened session with just 268 million shares changing hands by the close of business, the lowest level of the year.

Northern Electric returned from its brief suspension 1p firmer at 639p just hours before the extended deadline for acceptances of CE Electric's £782 million bid. The Takeover Panel, which was responsible for extending the deadline, also rapped BZW, Northern's adviser, for withholding information that might have affected the outcome of the bid.

Meanwhile, CE Electric was facing fierce opposition to the bid from the Prudential Corporation, the City's biggest fund manager, which was again bidding for stock in the marketplace. By the 1pm deadline for the bid on Tuesday, the Pru had picked up 709,487 shares through Cazenove, the broker, stretching its total holding to 12.05 per cent. Brokers said then it was unlikely to be enough to save Northern from the clutches of CE Electric. Northern finished 4p cheaper, at 637p.

The takeover spotlight has now fallen on **Yorkshire Electricity**, up 4p at 802½p, and **Southern Electric**, unchanged at 778½p, simply because they are the two remaining independent regional electricity companies. City speculators think it can only be a matter of time before bids are forthcoming.

Christmas certainly came early for fans and shareholders alike in **Sunderland**, the latest Premiership side to join the stock market. Placed at 583p by Charterhouse Tilney, the broker, the shares opened at 652½p, and touched a peak of 735p, before ending the session at 732½p, a premium of 182½p. By the close of business a total of 215,545 shares had changed hands.

British Borneo strengthened, climbing 56p to 815p, after announcing the purchase of blocks from Shell's Leo development in the Gulf of Mexico. James Capel, the company's broker, is talking the shares up to the 900p level.

Just days after launching its bid Fairey has raised its terms for **Burnfield** by 11.5 per cent to 165p. The new terms are 25 of its own shares for every 92 Burnfield, valuing the group at £57.7 million. Burnfield dipped 1½p, to 142p, on the news, while Fairey finished 3p dearer at 601p.

Allied Domecq looks like ending the year on a firm note with the price adding another 10½p at 450p, for a two-day gain of 25p. Stock shortages among market-makers and a "buy" recommendation from Lehman Brothers, the US securities house, are said to be behind this apparent revival in the price. After hitting a low for the year of 419p recently, the shares are likely to figure prominently among the New Year share tips.

The slide continued in **Brake Brothers**, with the shares tumbling a further 26p to a new low of 550p in the wake of Monday's profits warning. That stretches the fall of the past two days to 206½p. The group blamed mounting losses at Puritan Maid, its recently acquired chilled distribution business. The company had been expected to make £29 million, compared with £27.1 million, but now £24 million is forecast.

LucasVarity was another loser, dipping a further 1p to 225½p after the departure of John Grant, finance director, just four months in the job since the merger of Lucas Industries and Varity Corporation of the US.

The sale of its German and Italian fine paper businesses lifted **Bunzl** 3p, to 229½p. Brokers saw the disposal as a positive move, with the group continuing to move out of low-margin operations and concentrating on the dearer end of the market.

A 24 per cent increase in pre-tax profits to £372,000 lifted **Deep Sea Leisure** 8p to 172½p.

☐ ***GILT-EDGED:*** Prices ended the session on a firm note, having rallied from an early mark-down. Longer-dated issues were squeezed £¼ higher during the last hour of the shortened trading session. In futures the March series of the long gilt rose three ticks to £110 in the lowest volume of the year with just 6,000 contracts completed. Treasury 8 per cent 2015 was £$\frac{7}{32}$ dearer at £103$\frac{25}{32}$, while Treasury 8 per cent 2000 closed £$\frac{1}{16}$ higher at £102$\frac{25}{32}$.

☐ ***NEW YORK:*** Wall Street's Christmas rally resumed with the Dow Jones industrial average rising 33.83 points to 6,522.85, putting it close to its record closing high of 6,547.79, set on November 25.

Consumers seek clearer rules on gas competition

BY CHRISTINE BUCKLEY, INDUSTRIAL CORRESPONDENT

THE gas industry will come under increased pressure in the new year to improve the system which allows customers to switch suppliers as fresh problems emerge over billing in the South West.

Some bills for gas supplied since April have just been issued by SwebGas. Meanwhile, British Gas has secured an opt-out from guidelines so it can accept customers back without insisting on fresh terms to bind them to British Gas for a set period.

The Gas Consumers Council will press Ofgas, the regulator, for clearer rules on billing customers before they transfer in an effort to stem confusion as the next phase of competition looms. After the disarray which marked the opening of competition for 500,000 households in the South West — and which has continued — the industry is keen to smooth transference procedures before 1.5 million more households are able to shop around for their gas in February and March.

Ofgas, under Clare Spottiswoode, the Director-General, said it was trying to iron out problems before the next rounds and was working with suppliers on final meter checks before transference.

Marketing is also likely to feature in the last major strategy session before competition is extended to Dorset and the former county of Avon after the controversy triggered by aggressive campaigning by a number of companies.

SwebGas blames "the long lines of communication now involved" for issuing bills to dozens of customers for gas supplies stretching back over eight months.

The customers were among the first tranche to switch suppliers. But amid a number of disputes about marketing tactics in which the Office of Fair Trading intervened, the customers said they had not realised they were switching contracts or did not want to do so and asked to return to British Gas. The few dozen remaining have not returned to British Gas.

British Gas has also revealed early problems with customers returning to the fold because the Department of Trade and Industry guidelines said they must return on contract.

This stipulation, now changed, meant that customers who had made mistakes in the early stages of competition had to return to British Gas on new terms which would bind them to the company for a year. British Gas said that 2,000 customers have returned. More than 84,700, or 17 per cent of homes, have moved to new gas companies in the South West.

Spottiswoode: problems

Burnfield caves in to Fairey Group bid

BY JASON NISSE

FAIREY GROUP has persuaded Burnfield, the rival engineering group, to cave in to its takeover bid after a last-minute offer increase to £57.7 million.

The all-share bid was increased on Tuesday morning after talks between the two sides led Fairey to increase the offer value first from £51 million to £55 million and then to the final £57.7 million.

Fairey is offering 25 of its shares for every 92 of Burnfield's, which valued each Burnfield share at 163.3p compared with a Tuesday close of 142p.

Because of a technicality to do with Burnfield's proposed £24 million purchase of LDS, the privately owned vibration measurement group, Burnfield's board is not able to recommend the Fairey offer.

However, at an extraordinary meeting on Monday to approve the LDS deal, Brian McGowan, Burnfield's chairman, will propose an adjournment while Fairey goes ahead with its bid.

Once the bid goes through Clive Snowden, Burnfield's managing director, is expected to depart with a payoff of about £250,000.

	Dec 24 close	Dec 23 close
AMP Inc	37¾	38⅛
AMR Corp	91	87⅝
ASA	37⅜	34¼
AT & T	38½	40
Abbott Labs	54⅛	52⅞
Advanced Micro	24⅛	25⅛
Aetna Life	72	76⅛
Ahmanson (HF)	32⅞	33⅝
Air Prod & Chem	69½	68⅛
AirTouch Comm	25⅝	25⅞
Alberto-Culver B	47⅞	48⅝
Albertson's	35⅛	35⅝
Alcan Aluminm	34⅛	34⅛
Alco Standard	51¼	50
Allied Signal	69⅞	67½
Alum Co of Am	63⅛	61¼
Amax Gold Inc	6⅞	6⅛
Amerada Hess	58⅞	58⅞
Amer Brands	48⅞	48⅞
Amer El Power	40½	40⅞
Amer Express	58⅞	56⅞
Amer Genl Corp	41	40
Amer Home Pr	64⅞	60
Amer Intl	112⅝	110⅝
Amer Stores	39⅞	41¼
Amer Standard	38⅛	37⅝
Ameritech	58⅝	59
Amoco	77⅞	80⅞
Anheuser-Busch	41⅞	41⅛
Apple Computer	25⅛	27⅞
Archer Daniels	21⅛	22⅝
Armco	4⅛	4⅞
Armstrng Wrld	73⅝	69⅞
Asarco	26⅛	25
Atl Richfield	141⅛	136⅝
Auto Data Pro	42⅝	43⅝
Avery Dennison	70⅝	34⅞
Avon Products	55⅞	57⅞
Baker Hughes	36⅞	38
Baltim Gas & El	27⅞	26⅞
Banc One	45⅞	44⅞
BankAmerica	98⅝	101⅛
Bank of NY	34⅞	34⅛
Bankers Tr NY	86⅛	88⅝
Barnett Banks	42	41½
Bausch & Lomb	36⅛	36⅝
Baxter Intl	41	41⅞
Bectn Dickinsn	42	43⅞
Bell Atlantic	61⅛	62⅝
Bell Industries	21⅛	21⅛
BellSouth	39	38⅝
Black & Decker	37½	30
Block (H&R)	29⅝	29⅝
Boeing	96½	103⅝
Boise Cascade	31⅛	32⅛
Bristol Myrs Sq	115	113
Browning Ferris	27	26½
Brunswick	25⅝	24
Burlington Nthn	87⅞	86⅛
CMS Energy Corp	32⅞	33
CNA Financial	106⅛	107⅞
CPC Intl	82⅞	78
CSX	47	43
Campbell Soup	80⅞	80⅞
Can Pacific	27⅛	26½
Carolina Pwr	36⅛	36⅝
Caterpillar	77⅛	76⅞
Central & SW	26⅝	25⅝
Champion Intl	43⅞	42⅞
Chase Manhat	91	91⅞
Chevron Corp	65⅝	66
Chrysler	35⅛	33½
Chubb Corp	53⅞	54⅛
Cigna Corp	137½	137⅝
Citicorp	108⅝	104
Clorox	101⅛	94⅞
Coastal Corp	48⅝	50
Coca Cola	49⅞	52⅝
Coca Cola Ent	43⅞	45⅞
Colgate-Palmolive	92⅞	91⅛
Columbia Gas	64⅝	63⅝
Columbia/HCA	40⅞	40⅞
Compaq Comp	81⅞	72⅞
Comp Ass Int	63⅞	60⅝
Conagra	52⅞	51
Conrail	96⅞	100
Cons Edison	28⅝	29⅝
Cons Nat Gas	50⅞	56⅛
Cooper Inds	41½	40⅝
Corestates	51⅛	53
Corning Inc	42	44½
Crown Cork	52⅞	52⅞
Dana Corp	30⅞	32½
Dayton Hudson	39⅝	39
Deere	43⅝	41½
Delta Air Lines	75	70⅞
Deluxe Corp	31½	31½
Digital Equip	39⅞	37½
Dillard Dept St	31⅛	30⅞
Disney (Walt)	71⅛	72⅝
Dominion Res	37½	38⅝
Donelley (RR)	32⅝	30½
Dover Corp	52⅝	49⅞
Dow Chemical	82⅞	79⅝
Dow Jones	34½	33⅞
Dresser	32⅝	32⅝
Duke Power	45⅞	45⅝
Dun & Bradstreet	22½	23⅞
Du Pont	98⅝	95⅞
Eastman Chem	56½	55⅝

	Dec 24 close	Dec 23 close
Eastman Kodak	81⅛	80⅝
Eaton Corp	68⅝	69⅝
Edison Intl	19⅝	19⅝
Elect Data Sys	47⅝	44⅝
Emerson Elec	97	98⅝
Engelhard Corp	20	19⅞
Enron Corp	45⅝	44
Entergy	27⅞	28⅝
Ethyl Corp	9	9
Exxon	94½	100⅞
FMC Corp	75⅝	71
FPL Group	45⅝	45⅝
Federal Express	43⅝	42⅝
Fed Nat Mtge	39⅞	39⅝
First Bk Sys	71⅛	70⅝
First Union Rty	10⅞	11⅛
Fleet Fnl Grp	54⅝	51⅛
Fluor Corp	67⅝	62
Ford Motor	33½	31⅝
GTE Corp	45⅝	44⅞
Gannett	77	75
Gap Inc Del	32⅝	32
Gencorp	18⅝	17⅞
Gen Dynamics	72	70⅞
Gen Electric	99⅞	101
Gen Mills	64	65⅞
Gen Motors	58⅞	55⅝
Gen Reinsurance	155⅝	150⅝
Gen Signal	43⅝	42⅝
Genuine Parts	45⅝	45⅞
Georgia Pac	73⅛	70⅝
Gillette	72⅝	72
Glaxo Wellc ADR	31⅛	31⅛
Goodrich (BF)	44⅞	39⅝
Goodyear Tire	49⅝	50⅞
Grt Atl Pac Tea	32⅝	32⅝
Great Wstn Fin	30⅞	29⅝
Halliburton	60⅝	62⅝
Harcourt General	54⅝	47⅝
Heinz (HJ)	37⅞	36⅛
Hercules	48⅝	43⅞
Hershey Foods	47⅝	45⅞
Hewlett Packard	54⅝	50⅝
Hilton Hotels	29	26⅛
Home Depot	52⅝	51
Homestake Mng	15⅝	14⅛
Honeywell	67⅞	67⅞
Household Intl	93	91⅛
Houston Inds	21⅛	22⅝
Humana	19	20
ITT Corp	44⅞	42½
Illinois Tool	83⅞	80
Illinova	26⅞	27⅛
INCO	34⅝	32
Ingersoll Rand	47⅛	45⅝
Inland Steel	18⅝	19⅝
Intel Corp	125⅞	132⅞
IBM	163⅛	154⅝
Intl Flav & Fr	45⅞	46⅝
Intl Paper	41⅛	40⅞
James River Va	32⅞	34⅛
Jhnsn & Jhnsn	51⅛	49⅞
Kellogg	66⅛	67⅞
Kerr-McGee	71⅛	73
Kimberly-Clark	95⅞	96⅛
Kmart	11⅛	10⅞
Knight-Ridder	40⅞	39⅞
Lilly (Eli)	76⅛	75⅝
Limited Inc	18⅞	18⅛
Lincoln Nat	52⅝	52⅝
Litton	47	45⅝
Liz Claiborne	42⅞	38⅝
Lockheed Martin	90	88⅝
Louisiana Pac	22⅛	21⅛
MCI Comm	30⅝	32
Marriott Int	55	54⅛
Marsh & McLnn	112	105⅝
Masco Corp	35⅝	35⅝
May Dept St	49⅝	47⅝
Maytag Corp	19⅞	19⅞
McDonalds	45⅝	46
McDonnell D	52½	65⅝
McGraw Hill	44⅛	46⅛
Mead Corp	58⅝	57⅝
Medtronic	64⅛	67⅝
Mellon Bk	70⅝	71⅝
Merck Inc	81	83
Merrill Lynch	78⅛	82
Microsoft	154⅞	83⅝
Minnesota Mine	83⅝	84⅛
Mobil Corp	121⅛	124⅛
Monsanto	38⅝	39⅝
Morgan (JP)	91⅛	99⅞
Motorola Inc	55½	58⅝
Natl Semi	26	25
Natl Service Ind	34⅝	37
Navistar Int	9⅞	9⅛
NY Times A	38	37⅝
Newmont Mng	45⅝	44⅞
Niag Mohawk	8⅞	9⅛
Nike B	55⅛	60⅞
NL Industries	10⅛	11
Noram Energy	15⅝	15⅝
Nordstrom	44	39⅞
Norfolk Sthrn	89	88⅞
Nthn State Pwr	46⅛	46⅛
Norwest Corp	45⅝	45⅝
Nynex Corp	45⅝	47
Occidental Pet	23⅝	23⅛
Ohio Edison	23	22⅞

	Dec 24 close	Dec 23 close
Oracle	49⅞	42⅝
Oryx Energy Co	20⅞	23⅛
Overseas Ship	16⅞	16⅛
Owens Corning	42⅞	41⅛
PHH Corp	42⅝	41⅛
PPG Industries	60⅞	56⅛
PNC Bank	38⅞	38⅞
PP&L Res	23⅛	23⅞
Paccar Inc	68⅞	68
Pacificorp	20½	20½
Pac Enterprises	30⅛	30⅞
Pac Gas & Elect	23⅝	21⅛
Pac Telesis	36⅞	35⅞
Pall Corp	25½	26
Parker Hannifin	40⅞	39
Peco Energy	25	25⅛
Penney (JC)	53⅞	49
Pennzoil	56⅛	57
Pepsico	29½	29⅝
Pfizer	85⅞	85
Pharm & Upjhn	38⅞	39
Phelps Dodge	71⅛	69
Philip Morris	103⅞	113
Phillips Pet	44⅝	44⅝
Pitney Bowes	59⅛	56⅛
Polaroid	42⅝	41⅛
PriceCostco	23⅛	24⅝
Procter & Gmbl	104⅞	108½
Providian	52⅞	52⅞
Pub Serv E & G	28⅛	27⅞
Quaker Oats	37⅝	38⅛
Ralston Purina	75⅝	74⅞
Raychem Corp	84⅛	80⅞
Raytheon	51	48⅞
Reebok Intl	39⅝	41⅞
Reynolds Metals	58⅝	56⅞
Rockwell Intl	62⅝	64
Rohm & Haas	79⅝	80⅛
Royal Dutch	166	170⅝
Rubbermaid	24	23⅞
SBC Comms	51⅛	51⅛
Safeco Corp	41⅛	39⅝
St Paul's Cos	59⅞	59½
Salomon Inc	45	46⅞
Sara Lee Corp	38⅞	38
Schering Plough	69⅝	67⅞
Schlumberger	102½	105
Seagram	40	40⅞
Sears Roebuck	50½	45⅝
Shell Trans	98⅝	99⅝
Sherwin Wilms	58⅝	55⅞
Skyline Corp	26⅛	25⅞
Snap-On-Tools	36	36⅛
Southern Co	22½	22⅝
Sprint Corp	40⅞	38⅝
Stanley Works	29⅝	27⅞
Sun Company	24⅞	24⅝
Sun Microsys	58⅝	28⅝
Suntrust	49⅝	50⅞
Supervalu	29⅝	28⅞
Sysco Corp	33⅛	32⅞
TRW Inc	98⅞	49⅝
TCC Inds	1⅛	1⅛
Tandem Comp	14⅞	13⅝
Tandy Corp	42⅞	44⅝
Temple Inland	54⅝	53⅛
Tenneco	51½	44⅞
Texaco	99⅞	97⅛
Texas Inst	66½	64⅛
Texas Utilities	40⅝	40⅛
Textron	95	90⅞
Time Warner	40⅝	37½
Times-Mirror A	51⅛	53
Timken	45⅞	45⅝
Torchmark	52⅞	51⅛
Toys R Us	34⅝	31⅛
Transamerica	79⅝	81½
Travelers	43⅝	45½
Tribune	83⅝	79⅝
Tyco Int	54⅝	53
UST Inc	32⅝	32⅝
UAL	57⅞	60⅝
US Inds	32½	31⅛
US West Comm	30⅝	31⅛
USX Marathon	24	25
Unicom	29⅛	26⅝
Unilever NV	168⅝	173⅝
Union Camp	49½	47½
Union Carbide	45⅝	40⅛
Union Pacific	57⅝	60⅝
Unisys Corp	7⅛	6⅛
USAIR Group	24⅝	24
USF&G Corp	19⅝	21
US Life	30⅞	32½
United Tech	136½	67⅝
Unocal Corp	41⅛	40⅛
VF Corp	68⅝	64⅝
WMX Tech	30	34
Wal-Mart Stores	26	23⅛
Warner-Lambert	70⅝	78⅝
Wells Fargo	279½	275⅝
Westinghouse El	18⅝	18½
Weyerhaeuser	46⅞	46⅛
Whirlpool	48½	45⅞
Whitman	23⅝	23⅛
Winn Dixie	30	32⅝
Woolworth	23⅝	21⅛
Wrigley (Wm) Jr	57⅝	57
Xerox	49⅞	50⅞
Yellow Corp	14⅛	14.5620

DES JENSON

A Bifu member spreads the union's message of protest against the Lloyds TSB policy on Christmas Eve opening hours

Lloyds keeps its doors open

LLOYDS TSB managed to keep most of its branches open on Christmas Eve afternoon despite a call from Bifu, the Banking Insurance and Finance Union, for its 20,000 members to strike in support of the traditional early closing (Gavin Lumsden writes).

However, widespread reports of long queues at cash dispensers outside Lloyds TSB branches undermined the bank's argument that its customers wanted a full banking service on Christmas Eve.

Lloyds TSB said that all but 74 of its 2,500 branches had stayed open on Tuesday afternoon. A Lloyds TSB spokesman said: "The vast majority of our staff have supported our move to be seen to support our customers. Our smaller business customers have been extremely happy that they were able to cash up in the afternoon."

However, Bifu insisted thousands of its members had gone home and that many of the branches had only been kept open by skeleton teams, frequently bussed in from elsewhere. Noel Howell, a Bifu spokesman, admitted that many branches had stayed open but claimed customers had not gone in. "People just want the dosh from the cash machines to get on with the shopping," he said.

Ed Sweeney, Bifu general secretary, said: "The banks may well want to follow supermarkets in their drive to extend opening hours, but they're also going to have to follow the supermarkets and take on extra staff, renegotiate working hours and seek volunteers for sensitive times like Christmas and New Year."

Millions answer the call to switch to 24-hour banking by telephone

BY SARA MCCONNELL

RECORD numbers of bank customers are expected to take advantage of all-hours telephone banking services over Christmas and new year, after the busiest run-up to the season in recent years.

Leading banks have collectively signed up millions of customers to telephone banking services over the past two years, after initial doubts about demand. Over the Christmas period customers have been checking depleted balances, moving money between accounts to ease Christmas cashflow problems and paying bills before new ones arrive in the new year.

This follows record spending in the high street on credit and debit cards in the days before Christmas. Barclays processed an unprecedented 2.9 million transactions on the Monday before Christmas, exceeding even the 2.8 million the bank handled on Saturday.

At 3am on Christmas Eve Barclays dealt with seven card transactions a second as people took advantage of all-night supermarket opening.

Cash points dispensed £2,100 a second to Barclays customers alone on Monday, with Thurrock Lakeside, the Metro Centre at Gateshead, Camden Town and Sloane Street topping the withdrawal charts. South Kensington Underground was in the "top ten" for the first time.

First Direct, the telephone banking arm of the Midland and the longest-established telephone bank, is expecting to handle almost 9,000 calls today, nearly double the 4,567 calls it received last year. NatWest expects more than 9,700 calls from customers to its computerised Action Line on New Year's Day after receiving more than 3,300 on Christmas Day. Today it expects about 10,000 calls, twice as many as last year.

For the first time this year the bank's Prime Line service, which offers customers access to their own banking adviser over the phone, was open over the Christmas period. TSB, whose Phonebank service also operates 24 hours every day, is expecting nearly double the number of last year's calls, both today and on New Year's Day. Last year it received 1,800 calls on Boxing Day and 3,440 on New Year's Day. On the morning of Christmas Day alone, Phonebank received 300 calls, more than double last year's tally.

Barclays, which has seen a fourfold increase in customers signing up for its Barclaycall service, is bracing itself for 2,400 calls on New Year's Day and 1,500 today. Yesterday it had about 160.

Lloydsline, which like Barclaycall limits its opening hours, is also expecting nearly double the number of calls it had last year.

Many customers called to wish staff Merry Christmas. But banks denied that those who called their bank over Christmas were sad people who could find nothing better to do. First Direct said: "A lot of people are working over Christmas and ring the bank to sort their money out in a quiet moment."

Direct Line Financial Services, which sells financial products over the telephone reported a rush of new custom in the run-up to Christmas. A total of 1,000 mortgages valued at £60 million have been added to the company's books.

Cable industry turns into two-horse race

Companies have to get bigger or sell out because of economies of scale, **Eric Reguly** reports

The cable industry is imploding. A year ago there were 20 or so players of various shapes and sizes, all scrambling to find a way forward in a sector that has done no favours for either shareholders or customers. Since then, the industry has turned into a two-horse race.

On the inside lane is Cable and Wireless Communications (CWC), the four-way merger of Mercury Communications and the Nynex, Bell CableMedia and Videotron cable companies.

Taking the outside lane is TeleWest Communications, controlled by US West and Tele-Communications Inc, the giant American phone and media groups. TeleWest will lose its status as the largest cable company when CWC is formally created in the spring.

A dozen or so medium-sized and small players occupy the back stretches.

They include International CableTel of the US, Diamond Cable, which is controlled by Goldman Sachs, and Comcast, owned by Warburg Pincus, another investment bank.

The consensus in the City is that most of them will be absorbed by either TeleWest or CWC by the end of 1997. Small cable companies have little chance of survival against telephony and broadcasting powerhouses such as British Telecom and BSkyB, the satellite broadcaster 40 per cent owned by News International, owner of *The Times*.

KPN, the Dutch telecoms and postal group, will trigger the next — and probably last — round of consolidation. KPN, through the Telecential and IVS cable companies in Britain, has access to some 750,000 homes in its franchise areas, but has decided it lacks the bulk to become an industry force; TeleWest, by comparison, has five million homes in its franchises. CS First Boston, KPN's investment bank, is to send out the sales documents in the new year.

Gary Ames, chief executive of US West's international operations, based in London, said that either US West or TeleWest were potential buyers of KPN's cable assets. He said: "We will have to look closely at KPN and other cable companies."

The others include French-controlled General Cable, one of the first to report operating profits.

TeleWest and General have been circling each other for some time, but they are still far apart on price. If TeleWest passes on General there is a good chance that it will go to CWC.

Cable companies have to get bigger or sell out because of economies of scale. Overhead costs can be reduced dramatically when marketing programmes, promotions and service centres deal with several franchises instead of just one or two.

More importantly, buying power for everything from electronics gadgets for cable systems to pay-per-view rights increases proportionately with size.

The cable companies would have considerable clout in Hollywood if they had the ability to deliver hundreds of thousands, or even millions, or viewers.

TeleWest and CWC are gambling that size and buying power will reverse their fortunes. TeleWest and the cable companies within CWC are still trading below their flotation prices.

Analysts think that TeleWest and CWC may even merge in a year or two to form a giant cable company. Mr Ames does not rule out the idea, although he thinks TeleWest is large enough to go it alone for a while.

Oftel, the telecoms regulator, probably would not oppose the idea of TeleWest and CWC coming together. It has stated that it wants market forces, not its own rules, to act as BT's regulator.

That, however, will not happen until BT is confronted with a competitor that can scare it.

Bunzl sells two paper units to Dutch for £61m

Bunzl, the paper and plastics group, is selling its German and Italian fine paper businesses to KNP BT, the Dutch group, for £61.6 million. Bunzl said the two businesses were achieving low margins while the group was focusing on higher-margin areas.

Completion of the disposal is conditional upon clearance under EU merger control regulations for which the parties will make an application shortly. The two businesses sold are Wilhelm Seiler of Germany and Bunzl Italia. The sale includes £4 million in external debts, which will be assumed by KNP BT.

Merck sues

Merck & Co, the pharmaceutical company, is suing SmithKline Beecham to prevent it distributing a chickenpox vaccine in the US. Merck has sued four affiliates of SmithKline claiming exclusive rights to distribute the OKA strain varicella vaccine in the US and Canada. It has also filed for damages in the Delaware Chancery Court.

Merck says in the court papers that it received exclusive North American rights until 2005 to produce the drug. But Merck claims that SmithKline has told analysts that it has received approval from the Food and Drug Administration to distribute the drug in the US from next year.

Deals passed

Young Holdings said that the open offer to fund its acquisition of Madison Holdings was accepted by shareholders representing 56 per cent of the company. Shares not taken up have been placed with institutional investors. Optical Express said it received valid acceptances of its offer for Specialeyes representing 59.02 per cent of the company.

Fleets merge

Britain's two biggest passenger ferry companies, P & O and Stena, have signed their agreement to merge fleets on the Dover to Calais crossing to fight competition from the Channel Tunnel. The proposed £400 million merger is the subject of an MMC inquiry.

Railfreight sold

English Welsh and Scottish Railway has bought Railfreight Distribution, the international freight subsidiary of the British Railways Board. No price was disclosed. Railfreight, which operates services through the Channel Tunnel, made losses of £58.6 million in 1995-96.

TOURIST RATES

	Bank Buys	Bank Sells
Australia $	2.19	2.03
Austria Sch	19.27	17.77
Belgium Fr	56.48	52.18
Canada $	2.393	2.233
Cyprus Cyp£	0.819	0.764
Denmark Kr	10.51	9.71
Finland Mkk	8.34	7.69
France Fr	9.17	8.52
Germany Dm	2.76	2.54
Greece Dr	430	405
Hong Kong $	13.59	12.59
Iceland	120	100
Ireland Pt	1.06	0.98
Israel Shk	5.77	5.12
Italy Lira	2664	2509
Japan Yen	205.60	189.60
Malta	0.643	0.598
Nethrlnds Gld	3.066	2.836
New Zealand $	2.51	2.29
Norway Kr	11.37	10.57
Portugal Esc	272.50	254.00
S Africa Rd	8.42	7.62
Spain Pta	226.00	213.00
Sweden Kr	12.12	11.32
Switzerland Fr	2.36	2.18
Turkey Lira	186400	173400
USA $	1.773	1.643

Rates for small denomination bank notes only as supplied by Barclays Bank. Different rates apply to traveller's cheques. Rates as at close of trading on Tuesday.

[illegible]

Neural networking closes in on the consumer

Marianne Curphey on a computer system that aims to keep customers faithful to their insurance companies in a highly competitive market

How predictable are you? Your age, postcode, daily newspaper and last year's family holiday could be all an insurance company needs to draw up a picture of your secret life.

The majority of the big UK composites are testing complex computer systems to predict consumer behaviour and draw up lifestyle sketches. Known as neural networking, it is the buzz word in the insurance industry. Its current popularity is fuelled by competitive pressure and falling premium rates, and the need to keep existing customers to maximise profit margins.

Insurers make very little money from attracting new business and writing a new risk — the real profit is to be made from renewing existing policies of those customers considered a good risk. Most companies average only a 70-80 per cent retention rate, and all fall victim to "churning" when rivals poach their clients. The promise of neural networking is that by feeding in many small pieces of information about each customer and then cross-referencing it many times, the computer will be able to predict which customer is likely to be the most fickle. They can then be targeted and encouraged to stay.

The computer software which analyses this data is a sophisticated version of the program that all insurers use to work out whether you are a good risk, based on your age, driving experience and no-claims bonus. The need to retain customers has become pressing as the insurance industry has become more competitive with the arrival of Direct Line, the telephone insurer.

After Direct Line's huge success, 50 more direct insurers joined the industry, all competing for a finite amount of business. In response the composite insurers launched their own direct operations, and motor rates, particularly, were forced down. They have fallen 25-30 per cent over the past three years, and a report from Bacon & Woodrow, the actuary, predicts rates will rise only slightly next year. Motor insurance is the most competitive market, because widespread advertising by direct insurers has convinced consumers of the need to shop around for the best rates.

Household insurance is a slightly different story: mortgage providers have in the past bundled bricks and mortar cover together with contents insurance, and penalised home owners who went elsewhere for insurance. Research has shown also that consumers feel a certain loyalty towards their bank or building society and are more likely to buy insurance there.

But Direct Line claims these rates are uncompetitive, and has calculated that consumers pay millions of pounds in unnecessarily high premiums. As the message gets through to consumers to shop around, the ability to predict those who will switch becomes increasingly important. A spokeswoman for the Association of British Insurers said: "Insurers do not tend to discuss the results of neural networking with us because the data is so commercially sensitive."

One insurer prepared to talk about the value of neural networking is Royal & Sun Alliance. Mandy Bradley, who runs the company's personal systems operation, says one of the applications of neural networking is reducing the size of mailing lists for direct mailshots.

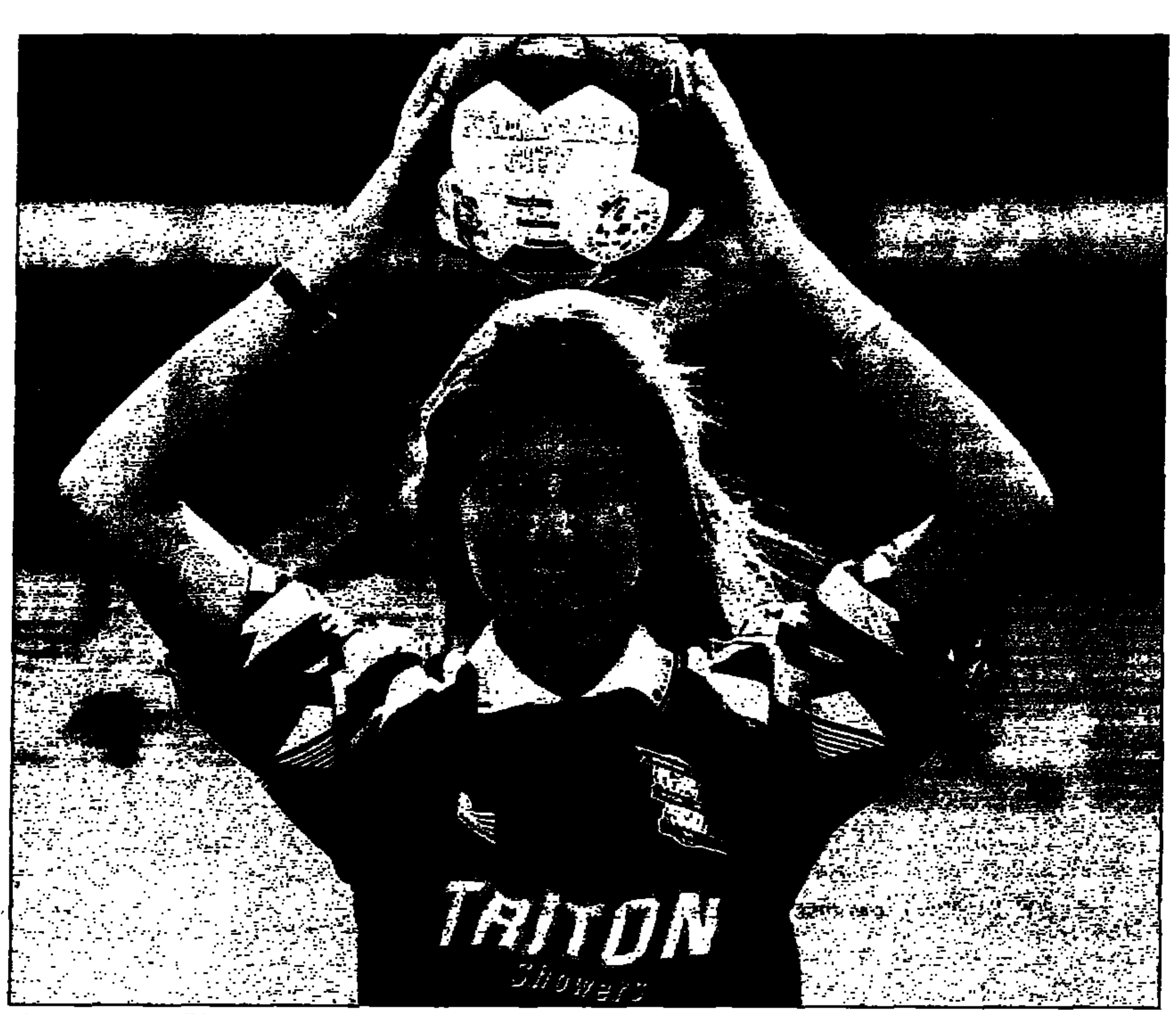
"We look at the list of people who have been mailed by RSA, and use the system to weed out those from whom we have no hope of receiving a reply. This reduces the cost of the direct mail and helps us to target the best group."

Flotations mean that dream team owes as much to Footsie as footie

Jason Nissé and **Alasdair Murray** see how clubs on the market score in financial terms

The gradual trend for football clubs to float has become a rush in recent months as they aim to cash in on football's new-found financial credibility and huge sums of TV money flooding into the game. The extra money that the clubs hope to find from the market could mean the difference between fulfilling dreams of European success and going to the wall.

The number of teams with either a full or AIM quote is sufficient now to field the City's very own dream team. Doubts remain about the quality of all the clubs joining the market and some of the team's positions need strengthening. Below *The Times* presents football's financial first XI.



Karren Brady will become the youngest female managing director of a quoted company when Birmingham City floats

1: Goalkeeper — Sunderland
Bob Murray, the dour Wearside chairman, has fended off doubts about Sunderland's financial future should it be relegated from the Premiership. He has also shown a financial clean sheet about the building of the new stadium, where eveything is sponsored bar the soap in the players' showers. Sunderland is susceptible to a low shot about its controversial accounting practices, where player purchases are not depreciated until a year after the deal. And despite Murray's claims about a million Sunderland fans, with Newcastle United just six miles away, Sunderland clearly does not command its area.

2: Right back — Loftus Road
This company is better at rugby — Wasps having a real chance of honours this season — than football. The lacklustre form of QPR on the field has been reflected in the share price, and while other football stocks have been roaring away, Loftus Road has been in neutral. This might change as QPR strikes towards promotion to the Premiership. Finding a permanent chief executive might also help and, with a strong property element, this is a good defensive share.

3: Left back — Celtic
Celtic has proved a consistent and reliable financial performer and is immensely popular with the fans — the club has 10,000 supporter shareholders, the most for any quoted club. Fergus McCann, a former marketing man for Pretty Polly, has also added some City class by attracting Patrick Sheehy, the former BAT chief, and Brian Quinn, ex-Bank of England, to the boardroom. Mr McCann believes Celtic is one of only four clubs in the country with a national, rather than local, franchise. But unlike Manchester United, Rangers and Liverpool, Celtic is a long way from proving its value on the fields of Glasgow, let alone Europe.

4: Midfield — Southampton
A surprise arrival on the quoted scene, the club has cleverly strung together a reverse takeover — the financial equivalent of a Le Tissier through ball — that should take them on to the market early next month. New captain, Rupert Lowe, admits to being an amateur sportsman (and a former West Ham fan to boot) but is a professional City man. The absence of any nearby Premiership rivals should give the club room to develop. The £10 million valuation placed on the club — £5 million less than paid for Alan Shearer alone — could prove to be a steal.

5: Centre half — Sheffield Utd
A strong, hard-tackling financial team which is best with its back to the wall is trying to return the club to its former glory. It has a questionable disciplinary record — former directors include Reg Brealey, of Tittaghur Jute, and Stephen Hinchliffe, of Facia — and has spent too long in the lower divisions. There is a big property play at hand and juicy incentives to return to the top flight. It may never be a star side, but if it was 0-0 in the 89th minute the Blades would be the team to put your money on.

6: Centre half — Tottenham Hotspur
Once flashy and controversial, Spurs has become, under Alan Sugar, the Amstrad boss, a boringly dependable company whose solid results, conservative financing and workmanlike attitude are refreshing in the frothy world of football finance. But Sugar's Spurs are hardly going to set the world on fire. The team may know how to defend a corner, and avoid giving away late goals, but can they win the silverware?

7: Midfield general — Manchester United
The Old Trafford club is the playmaker of football finance. Everyone else in the business is looking for its moves, be it the through ball to pay-per-view, the crossfield pass on sponsorship or the defensive tackle to use highy valued shares to finance property deals. United is the world-class performer and valued accordingly. A market capitalisation of £400 million is justified for one of the few truly global brands being properly exploited by a strong management team under Martin Edwards. But does that mean everyone else should have similar price tags?

8: Striker — Newcastle United
Expensive and flashy, Sir John Hall's team is out to prove it is bigger than its home town by forcing the council to dig up a public park so the "Toon" can build a new 55,000-seat stadium. The club's potential has long been hidden by bad management but it now shows signs of being a true competitor to Manchester United. Many of its moves appear aggressive, and there is a worry that, despite spending £60 million on players, it has nothing in the trophy cabinet. A new year float will show a valuation as astronomical as the £15 million paid for Alan Shearer. And like Shearer's price tag, it will take a great deal of living up to.

9. Striker — Birmingham City
Rescue from the obscurity of the lower divisions has not proved cheap. Birmingham has acquired something of a prima donna reputation with David Sullivan, the chairman who has put £7 million into the club, repeatedly threatening to sell out when faced with negative press criticism or opposition from the city council. Next month's float should add stability, and Karren Brady, who will be the youngest female MD of a quoted company, adds much-needed glamour. But £25 million is a lot to pay for a club that remains untested in the Premiership.

10: Winger — Caspian
Leeds United was a bargain basement purchase — £16 million for a club with average gates of 30,000 when Sunderland, with a third less attendance, is valued at more than £60 million. Although Chris Akers, of Caspian, presents himself as a visionary in the sports media world, no one appears to be getting on the end of his ambitious passes. Leeds rugby league club chose a rival owner, plans to build an indoor arena next door to Elland Road have yet to bear fruit and the signing of George Graham as manager brought the sort of football to encourage fans to go Christmas shopping. Plans to buy an ice hockey team or tempt Bradford Bulls, the rugby superleague side, into the fold are also doubtful. The team must score soon or face a spell in the reserves.

11: Winger — Chelsea Village
Chelsea's owner is a flashy performer whose shares have doubled in value since floating on AIM this year. This is despite the death of Matthew Harding, who as deputy chairman brought credibility, and an opaque shareholding structure. Not only has the identity of Rysaffe, the largest shareholder, never been revealed, but there is a new investor whose identity is not even known to Chelsea's company secretary. The company is valued at ten times its 1995-96 turnover despite reporting a loss of £2.95 million. Great hopes are pinned on the redevelopment of the Stamford Bridge stadium, but would you stay in a hotel there? This is the classic flatter-to-deceive club.

On the bench:
West Ham is talking float, Everton and Aston Villa are thinking float, and Arsenal, everyone's favourite to join the market, has seen its shares rise from £800 to £4,050 this year — so does it need a float? West Brom is slipping, hardly noticed, on to Aim to join the minnow's minnow, Preston North End, while shares in Millwall — nice stadium, shame about the club — show what can happen if a quoted team is relegated and cannot pull itself around — even with the skills of advertising guru Peter Mead behind the club.

WORD-WATCHING

Answers from page *31*

LATOMY

(a) A stone quarry, specifically of those at Syracuse. From the Greek *lâas*, *lâs* a stone + *-tomia* cutting. "Were these embassies mere child's play, or were there Timoleons concealed in the latomies?"

METASTASIS

(b) In rhetoric, a rapid transition from one point to another. Late Latin from the Greek *metástasis* removal, change, the noun from *methistánai* to remove. "Metastasis or Transition, or the flitting figure, when in brief words we pass from one thing to another."

MOSLINGS

(c) Morsels or small bits and pieces, perhaps the diminutive of *mossels*, a vulgar form of *morsels*. "Moslings are the thin shreds or scrapings of leather shaved off by the currier in dressing skins. They are used in wiping off metals while grinding and polishing."

LAUDIAN

(c) Of, pertaining to, or characteristic of William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury 1633-45, loyal supporter of Charles I and opponent of Puritans and other religious zealots. His attempt to impose the Prayer Book on the Scots precipitated the Civil War. So he lost his head in the Tower. "The Laudian clergy regarded Sunday simply as one of the holidays of the church."

SOLUTION TO WINNING CHESS MOVE

1 ... Re1+! 2 Rxe1 Qd4+! 3 Qxd4 dxe1Q checkmate

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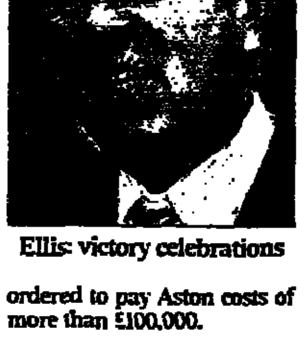
THE TIMES CITY DIARY

Bubbling over with success

A DOUBLE for Doug Ellis, one of the owners of Aston Manor Brewery and chairman of Aston Villa Football Club. Aston won its case against Cadbury Schweppes last Friday, then Villa went on to annihilate Wimbledon 5-0 at the weekend.

In a David v Goliath case, Schweppes claimed that Aston's Malvern Springs Still Natural Spring Water sounded uncannily like its own best-selling brand, Malvern Mineral Water.

Then it was discovered that the barrister for Schweppes also worked for Hereford & Worcester County Council. The judge ruled that the council had placed itself in a position where it had allied itself so closely with Schweppes that it was unable to exercise its duties as prosecutor. The council was ordered to pay Aston costs of more than £100,000.



Ellis: victory celebrations

Present imperfect

DISHEARTENING news from Lakeside Shopping Centre, the largest of its kind in the South of England. As many as 70 per cent of women either disliked what their partners bought them for Christmas, or gave huge hints as to what presents they preferred, according to a survey conducted by the mall. Out of a record number of 650,000 shoppers a week who visit Lakeside during the Christmas shopping period, who each spend around £130 on average, this is a sorry statistic. But is it really surprising when you discover that Sony Playstations and Rovers Return Teapots a la *Coronation Street* were among the most popular presents purchased.

Smoke without ire

ANOTHER gem from the second issue of the Treasury's Accommodation and Security Team newsletter. It appears that those naughty mandarins stubbornly refuse to play by the rules. "Doors to the designated smoking rooms should be kept shut at all times — as should corridor doors to offices in which colleagues smoke," it reads. Not to be beaten, the fag-busters have issued a contact number for those in need of a sign saying "Keep Door Closed".

GHT callers kept on hold, waiting for Green Flag National Breakdown to answer the phone, are serenaded by Martha and the Vandellas. The title of the poignant piece? Rescue Me.

Missing words

WHERE were those hardened hacks, those veteran hounds from the news agencies when the biggest business story of the pre-Christmas week drew to a conclusion? On Monday night the Takeover Panel rejected Northern's defence appeal, pushing it into the hands of CE Electric. But both Reuters and PA News stayed silent for more than an hour.

MORAG PRESTON

Companions of honour

Paid Company. *Radio 4 (FM), Noon.*

Presenter Simon Parks has a sensitive, capsular way of defining relationships. "The last poignant flutter of Edwardian manners" is how he sums up the link between the dowager Viscountess Scarsdale and Nancy Cammidge. Her ladyship, widow and nonagenarian, lives on her son's estate at Banbury, Oxfordshire. Nancy Cammidge is her housekeeper, cook, secretary and chauffeur ("Home, James, and don't spare the horses!" is Lady Scarsdale's jocular way of telling her that yet another shopping trip is over). They have never had a row or even a cross word. Lady Scarsdale's motto is: "Life's too short to stuff a mushroom". Nancy Cammidge would, in any case, have been the one to do the stuffing.

A Wizard of Earthsea. *Radio 4, 2.00pm.*

Having made such a terrific job of adapting the first novel in Ursula LeGuin's *Earthsea* trilogy, I don't see how Bert Coules could escape being asked to dramatise the other two. If that should happen, Janet Whitaker won't have any option but to return to the director's seat. *A Wizard of Earthsea* is a radio spectacle on a grand scale, full of sound and fury signifying nothing less than the odyssey of a wizard, played by Michael Maloney, to destroy an evil shadow that he has unwittingly launched on a mythological world. David Chilton's and Nick Russell-Pavier's music chills the blood. Judi Dench is the storyteller.

Peter Davalle

RADIO 1

8.00am Simon Mayo, includes suprise guest **11.30** George Michael in Concert. Simon Mayo presents an exclusive performance recorded earlier this year **1.00pm** Charlie Jordan **3.00** Dave Pearce **6.00** Evening Session Rewind **9.00** Star Review: Shirley Manson, the lead singer of Garbage **10.00** In Concert Classic: Blur **12.00** Mary Anne Hobbs **4.00am** Clive Warren, with the Early Breakfast Show

RADIO 2

6.00am Alex Lester **8.00** Wake up to Wogan, **10.00** Ken Bruce **1.00** Christmas Comedy Classics **1.30pm** Sounds Like Disney **3.00** Steve Wright **5.00** Christmas on Broadway **7.00** My Mammy and Me. A sit-com by Cathy MacPhail. With Eileen McCallum, Jake D'Arcy and Kate Donnelly **7.30** David Allan **9.00** Paul Jones **10.00** Mark Knopfler **10.30** Vintage Christmas: the Blue Carbuncle **11.00** Bob Harris **1.00am** Patrick Lunt **3.00** Mo Dutta

RADIO 5 LIVE

5.00am Morning Reports, includes at **5.45** Wake Up to Money **6.05** Christmas Quiz **7.00** the Breakfast Programme **9.05** Hong Kong at Christmas **11.05** Never Walk Alone (3/5) **11.30** Sport on Five **5.30** The Thursday Match, Sheffield Wednesday v Arsenal, Manchester City v Port Vale and Aberdeen v Celtic **10.05** Off Piste **11.05** Weather Reports **11.35** Tales of the Turf **12.05am** After Hours: Early Call, with Vincent Hanna **2.05** Up All Night, with Rhod Sharp

TALK RADIO

5.00am Chris Ashley and Sandy Warr **7.00** Paul Ross **9.00** Scott Chisholm **12.00** Philip Hodson **2.00pm** Tommy Boyd **4.00** Peter Deeley **7.00** Sports Zone **10.00** James Whale **1.00am** Ian Collins

WORLD SERVICE

All times in GMT. News on the hour.
5.30am Europe Today **6.30** Europe Today **7.15** Off the Shelf **7.30** Network UK **8.10** Words of Faith **8.15** Composer **8.45** Health Matters **9.05** Business **9.15** Sports International **9.45** Sport **10.30** BBC English **10.45** Off the Shelf **11.30** Meridian On Screen **12.05pm** Business **12.15** Britain Today **12.30** Assignment **2.05** Outlook **2.30** Multitrack **3.05** Sport **3.15** From Our Own Correspondent **3.30** Network UK **4.15** World Today **4.30** BBC English **4.45** Britain Today **5.30** Business **5.45** Sport **6.30** Assignment **7.01** Outlook **7.25** Words of Faith **7.30** John Peel **9.05** Business **9.15** Britain Today **9.30** Meridian Books **10.30** World Today **10.45** Sport **11.10** Take Five **11.15** Record Progress **11.30** The Ed Stewart Show **12.30am** Good Books **12.45** Britain Today **1.30** Outlook **1.55** Words of Faith **2.30** Pick of the World **3.15** Sport **3.30** Focus on Faith **4.30** Europe Today

CLASSIC FM

7.00 Mike Read on Boxing Day **10.00** The Lighter Side of Christmas **12.00** A Christmas Question of Classics **1.00pm** Alan Mann **3.00** Jack and the Beanstalk, with Joanna Lumley and Danny De Vito **4.00** Jamie Crick **7.00** Stanley Glasser's A-Z of Christmas **8.00** Boxing Day Evening Concert. Handel (Let the Bright Seraphim...); Bruce Saylor (Star of Wonder); Responsory (Iacobe omnium seculorum); Scarlatti (Cantata for solo voice and trumpet); Bach/Gounod (Ave Maria); Tchaikovsky (Adieu Forets; 1812 Overture, Op 49); Traditional (American Songs for Christmas) **10.00** Michael Mappin **1.00am** Sally Peterson

VIRGIN RADIO

6.00am Jeremy Clark **10.00** Graham Dene **2.00pm** Lynn Parsons **6.00** Paul Coyte (FM) / Robin Banks (AM) **10.00** Howard Pearce **2.00am** John Hipper

RADIO 3

6.00am On Air. Includes Schumann (Symphony No 1 in B flat (Spring); Daquin (Noels VII and VIII (Nouveau Livre de Noels); Strauss (Josephslegende); Schumann (Overture (Manfred); Haydn (Mass in G, Missa Sancti Nicolai)
9.00 Morning Collection. Beethoven (Overture (Zur Namensfeier); Mendelssohn (Six Songs without Words, Op 85 Bk 7); Nielsen (Violin Concerto)
10.00 Musical Encounters, With Mary Miller McConnell (Fermanagh Curves); Ravel (Introduction and Allegro); Stamitz (Clarinet Concerto in B flat); Grieg (How Fair Thou Art, Op 74 No 1); Bach, arr North (Suite in G, BWV1009); Massenet (Piano Concerto)
12.00 Composer of the Week: Tchaikovsky
1.00pm Opera Matinée: Fidelio, by Beethoven. Leonore rescues her husband Florestan from unjust imprisonment by the tyrannical Don Pizarro after disguising herself as a young man. With Ben Heppner, tenor, Cheryl Studer, soprano, Rene Pape, bass, Ruth Ziesak, soprano, Vienna State Opera Chorus and Philharmonic under Georg Solti
3.30 Bath Mozartfest 1995. Antony Pay, clarinet, Ian Brown, piano, the Nash Ensemble. Mozart (Trio in E flat, K498, Kegelstatt; Piano Quartet in G minor, K478); Brahms (Clarinet Quintet in B minor, Op 115)
5.00 Music Machine
5.15 The Life and Times of the Symphony. Paul Banks and Robert Layton discuss the differences between Mahler and Sibelius's works (4/5)
6.45 Digital Masters, includes Rachmaninov (Elegy in E flat minor, Op 3 No 1; Melody in E, Op 3 No 3; Polka of VR; Lilacs, Op 21 No 5); Schubert, arr Rachmaninov (Wohin? Die Schöne Müllerin); Kreisler, arr Rachmaninov (Liebesfreud); Anton Rubinstein (Barcarolle in G minor, Op 50 No 3); Tchaikovksy (November, The Seasons)
7.30. Chamber Music from Manchester. New London Consort, Catherine Bott, Helen Parker, Sally Bruce-Payne, Andrew King, Alistair Hamilton and Simon Grant, singers, Pavlo Beznosiuk, fiddle, Tom Finucane, lute, Stephen Henderson, percussion, Philip Pickett, recorder and director
9.25 By Woody Allen: The Lunatic's Tale. The dark story of a New York doctor torn between the delights of two contrasting women (4/5)
10.00 Music Restored. Performance by the Rose Consort of Viols and Catherine King, mezzo
10.45 The Shellac Show. Includes works by Bach, Boyce, Milhaud and Mehul
11.30 Composers of the Week: Ernest Chausson and Henri Duparc (r)
12.30am Jazz Notes. Digby Fairweather introduces Duke Ellington's 1957 version of the *Nutcracker Suite*
1.00 Through the Night

RADIO 4

5.55 Shipping (LW) 6.00 News **6.10** Farming **6.25** Prayer **6.30** Living World **7.00** Today
9.00 News (FM)
9.00 Test Match Special (LW): Zimbabwe v England. Live commentary from Harare
9.05 A Brush with Bicester (FM). A report on the issues surrounding fox hunting, as the Bicester Hunt agree to be wired for sound
9.45 Spike's Fleas, Knees and Hidden Elephants (FM), by Spike Milligan
10.00 The Amherst Myth (FM). Simon Armitage investigates the secret life of Emily Dickinson (r)
10.00 Daily Service (LW)
10.15 On This Day (LW)
10.30 Derek Cooper's Necessary Pleasures (FM). The best way to eat an eel
10.30 Test Match Special (LW)
11.00 Park Bench and Co
11.30 The Old Curiosity Shop, by Charles Dickins (2/6)
12.00 Paid Company: The Lady's Companion. See Choice
12.25 Wordly Wise 12.55 Weather
1.00 The World at One, with Nick Clarke
1.07 Test Match Special (LW)
1.40 The Archers (FM) (r) **1.55** Shipping
2.00 A Wizard of Earthsea. See Choice
4.00 News; The Waltons: A Superior Soap. Dilly Barlow visits the town of Schuyler in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia to meet the real Walton clan (r)
4.45 Short Story: Rumpole and the Widow Twankey, by John Mortimer
5.00 PM 5.50 Shipping **5.55** Weather
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.15 Letter from Over Here. Raymond Seitz, the former American ambassador to London, reflects on the importance of national holidays
6.30 The New York Stand-Up Comedy Show: My Comedy Career. A slot on one of the late-night network TV shows is a holy grail to aspiring American stand-ups. Joy Behar discusses the power of TV with the king of late-night chat Jay Leno
7.00 News 7.05 The Archers
7.20 Daring to be the Dane. A report on how Michael Maloney prepares to play Hamlet
8.00 Tales from the Organ Loft, with Jeremy Summerly
8.45 My Granny's Larder: Ribena. A light-hearted look at early convenience foods
9.00 Journeys to Imaginary Places. Frank Delaney goes in search of the imaginary landscape of Bella Vista, a sensual world created by the French novelist Colette
9.30 Kaleidoscope Feature. Tim Marlow examines the status of the artist's studio
10.00 The World Tonight, with Jeremy Harris
10.45 Book at Bedtime: High Spirits (4/5)
11.00 Bitter Medicine, by Sara Paretsky (2/6)
11.30 All About Eve. Women talk about the women who inspire them
12.00 News 12.30 The Late Book: Sir Henry at Rawlinson End, by Viv Stanshall (4/5)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As World Service

FREQUENCY GUIDE. RADIO 1. FM 97.6-99.8. RADIO 2. FM 88.0-90.2. RADIO 3. FM 90.2-92.4. RADIO 4. FM 92.4-94.6; LW 198; MW 720. RADIO 5 LIVE. MW 693, 909. WORLD SERVICE. MW 648; LW 198 (12.45-5.55am). CLASSIC FM. FM 100-102. VIRGIN RADIO. FM 105.8; MW 1197, 1215. TALK RADIO. MW 1053, 1089. Television and radio listings compiled by Peter Dear, Ian Hughes, Rosemary Smith, Susan Thomson, Jane Gregory and John McNamara.

Family Christmas grotesquely caricatured

REVIEW

Peter Barnard

Rudolph had no distinguishing marks until he went to Santa Claus asking for a 48-hour-year and some proper work experience. Santa, being an enlightened employer, told Rudolph that he could take over some of the Christmas deliveries. The other reindeer were jealous the following Christmas as Rudolph detached himself from the sled team, hooked a sack to an antler and descended into the East End of London.

He found Albert Square and spirited himself inside the Queen Vic. An hour later Santa and the other reindeer were alarmed to see a red glow in the sky, heading their way. It was Rudolph; the glow was from a bloody nose. Santa knew about Albert Square; because there was no avoiding **EastEnders** (BBC1) even in Lapland. But Santa thought that not even the Queen Vic could be a battlefield on Christmas Day.

Rudolph recounted a horror story of feuding brothers, feuding sisters, feuding parents and people with awful diseases. And the noise! People shouted at each other incessantly and doors were never closed if they could be slammed (one had done for Rudolph's nostrils). Santa said that Albert Square was an awful place and in future he would boycott it.

Him and me both. In its early days, I joined the general approval for *EastEnders*: good writing, good acting and tight plot development. That still applies, but it isn't enough. It especially isn't enough at 8.30 on Christmas night, when more children than usual are in front of the television. If there is a decline in moral values in this country, and if it is in any way connected to television (I stress those ifs), then the blame does not lie with mature explorations of crime and sexuality transmitted at sensible times. No, it lies with the constant drip-drip of appalling behaviour bogusly promulgated as "real life" in, especially, *EastEnders*.

Last night the assorted loose family units in the show "celebrated" Christmas Day. In half an hour, Billy the little boy went missing, there was a drunken row between the Mitchell brothers, Tiffany Mitchell walked out of the family lunch, Peggy Mitchell announced that she had cancer and an adulterous affair was launched. This is real life the way what we hear in lifts is real music. This is an insult perpetrated by the middle-class producers of *EastEnders* on the working-class people who mostly watch it. It is an absurd distortion of reality: grim, graceless and malevolent.

Several years ago two very senior BBC executives said to me privately that they despaired of *EastEnders*. "Why does nobody ever smile?" one of them said. The answer is that *EastEnders* is a law unto itself. No doubt you and I would claim to be sophisticated enough to see through this dismal nonsense, but a high percentage of the vast audience watching were being invited to believe that the behaviour of people in *EastEnders* is normal, acceptable, even desirable. The real Christmas message had no outlet in peak time last night, so getting on for 20 million people were left with *The Gospel According to EastEnders*. Isn't that just a tad worrying?

The mainstream Christmas night fare was the mix as usual and the BBC will win the ratings battle, again as usual, because this has become a phoney war: ITV spends its programme money when the big advertisers will subsidise it, not on nights like this. So *Jurassic Park*, *EastEnders*, *Only Fools and Horses* and *The Vicar of Dibley* were certain winners for BBC1 up against *Coronation Street*, *Des O'Connor* and *The Remains of the Day*.

But by far the best thing on the box last night was **Saint-Ex** (BBC2), a film made for the *Bookmark* team. It is the story of Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, whose aircraft disappeared over the Mediterranean in July 1943 — neither wreckage nor body was found. Saint-Exupéry was a pioneer aviator and writer, his most famous work being *The Little Prince*. He also had a tortured life, haunted by the death in infancy of his brother.

The film is exquisite. It moulds flashback, black and white sequences used to interview real people and colour used for the main, fictionalised, story into a seamless mosaic which is a delight for the eye. The lighting is superb, with light and shade utilised in ways reminiscent of a photograph by Karsh of Ottawa. None of which overwhelms excellent performances by Bruno Ganz as Saint-Exupéry and Miranda Richardson as Consuelo Carrillo, the love of his life.

But Christmas television really defines itself by the strength of its films and comedy and in the second category the BBC had several winners, including **The Vicar of Dibley** (BBC1). Usually "Christmas specials" induce groans, because they tend to be overlong. But Dibley disciplined itself to 45 minutes and the cast wasted none of the excellent lines written by Richard Curtis and Paul Mayhew Archer.

Their script centred on Geraldine Grainger's (Dawn French) attempt to satisfy parishioners by eating three Christmas lunches but the show's real strength is in good dialogue delivered with assured touch. French is a fine comedy actress and she is in good company. Emma Chambers as Alice, the daft verger, is becoming one of the great supporting roles in television comedy: we learnt last night that Alice has lived her life so far believing that Jesus was born in Dunstable, a childhood mishearing of "in a stable".

Real vicars are said to enjoy *Dibley* and one can see why. It is irreverent but never sacrilegious, it mocks the human foibles of the Church but not its underlying values. This is a clever trick requiring clever writers. Next year, Rudolph, try Dibley.

BBC

6.00am JOE 90 (7277336) **6.25** Santa and the Tooth Fairies (7289171) **6.50** Noddy (8517713) **7.20** Playdays (1806442) **7.40** Christopher and the Christmas Tree (5464084) **8.00** Christmas Time (11171) **8.30** Little Mouse on the Prairie (6588355) **8.55** Round the Twist (6567862) **9.20** Flintstones Christmas Carol (8892539)

10.10 FILM: An American Tail: Fievel Goes West (1991) Cartoon sequel about an immigrant mouse family (T) (4681133)

11.20 LYDDIE Period drama about a girl growing up in Canada during the new industrial age (8639959)

12.50pm NEWS (T) and weather (30212404)

12.58 REGIONAL NEWS (35350881)

1.00 NEIGHBOURS (T) (58757065)

1.20 JUST WILLIAM First of three dramas with Oliver Rokison as the mischievous schoolboy (T) (30890539)

1.50 FILM: Never Say Never Again (1983) Sean Connery as James Bond, attempting to prevent an egocentric criminal mastermind (Klaus Maria Brandauer) and his voluptuous sidekick (Barbara Carrera) from taking over the world. Directed by Irvin Kershner (T) (84193930)

4.00 THE WRONG TROUSERS Nick Park's Oscar-winning animated feature starring Wallace and Gromit (r) (T) (336)

4.30 THE WORLD OF PETER RABBIT AND FRIENDS (T) (7121510)

4.55 FINAL SCORE (8392336)

5.15 NEWS (T) and weather (5783997)

5.25 REGIONAL NEWS (6620510)

5.30 TOM AND JERRY (r) (854065)

5.35 NEIGHBOURS (r) (T) (147626)

6.00 FILM: Free Willy (1993) starring Jason James Richter, Lori Petty and Michael Madsen. A youngster befriends a captive killer whale and embarks on a race against time to release the unhappy creature back into the ocean. Directed by Simon Wincer (T) (24159355)

7.50 EASTENDERS Joe finds it hard to cope with reality, Pauline faces up to some home truths and Grant receives unwelcome advice from Peggy (T) (655201)

8.20 2POINT4 CHILDREN CHRISTMAS The Porter family spend Christmas as stowaways on a luxury cruise liner. Last in series (T) (828607)

9.00 ONE FOOT IN THE GRAVE CHRISTMAS SPECIAL Victor has a spooky encounter with forces seemingly not of this world (T) (9775)

10.00 NEWS (T) and weather

10.15 FILM: Sommersby (1993) Romantic drama based on the classic French film *The Return of Martin Guerre*. American Civil War veteran Richard Gere returns to his Tennessee hometown and put-upon wife Jodie Foster, but doubts soon begin to grow about his true identity. Directed by Jon Amiel (T) (135572)

12.05am FILM: The Graduate (1967) Oscar-winning comedy starring Dustin Hoffman as a naive college graduate seduced by a married older woman, Anne Bancroft. Directed by Mike Nichols (834350)

1.45 CLIVE ANDERSON ALL TALK (r) (T) (8802060)

2.20 WEATHER (1747337)

VideoPlus+ and the Video PlusCodes

The numbers next to each TV programme listing are Video PlusCode™ numbers, which allow you to programme your video recorder instantly with a VideoPlus+™ handset. Tap in the Video PlusCode for the programme you wish to record. Videoplus+ (™), Pluscode (™) and Video Programmer are trademarks of Gemstar Development Ltd.

6.55am FILM: Breakfast for Two (1937, b/w) Crazy comedy about a Texan heiress starring Barbara Stanwyck. Directed by Alfred Santell (7917775)

8.00 BARBARA STANWYCK: Fire and Desire Sally Field presents a tribute to the star of the silver screen (r) (3226336)

8.50 FILM: Cattle Queen of Montana (1954) starring Barbara Stanwyck and Ronald Reagan. Western in which Stanwyck plays a rancher battling to protect her cattle. Directed by Allan Dwan (2133591)

12.15pm FILM: Little Dorrit: Nobody's Fault (1987) starring Derek Jacobi, Alec Guinness and Sarah Pickering. First of a two-part adaptation of Charles Dickens's satire about a man intrigued by his mother's young seamstress upon his return from China. Directed by Christine Edzard. Part two can be seen tomorrow (T) (82160220)

1.05 CINDERELLA Rossini's opera with the Houston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Bruno Campanella (36775442)

3.45 CHOIR OF THE YEAR The youth semi-final (5621713)

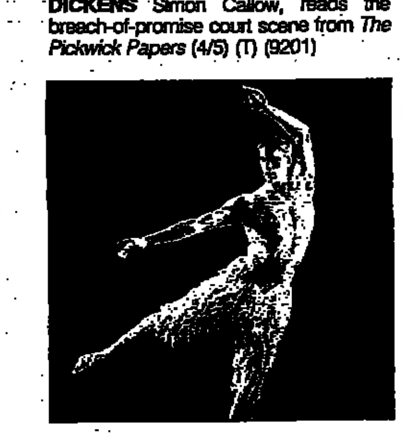
4.25 FILM: The Italian Job (1969) Classic comedy caper starring Michael Caine, Noël Coward and Benny Hill. Coward plans an audacious gold bullion robbery in the centre of Turin. Directed by Peter Collinson (T) (90626607)

6.00 EURO 96: When Football Came Home (r) (T) (25862)

7.00 JEREMY CLARKSON'S MOTORWORLD UK Jeremy Clarkson asks who was responsible for the demise of the British motor industry (3881)

7.30 A Tribute to Mohammed Amin Michael Buerk profiles the acclaimed cameraman, who died aboard a hijacked airliner in November (T) (591)

8.00 AN AUDIENCE WITH CHARLES DICKENS Simon Callow, reads the breach-of-promise court scene from *The Pickwick Papers* (4/5) (T) (9201)



Adam Cooper as the Swan (8.30pm)

8.30 SWAN LAKE Matthew Bourne's acclaimed "male" version of Tchaikovsky's ballet. The production features the Royal Ballet's Adam Cooper with Scott Ambler and Fiona Chadwick. David Lloyd Jones conducts the New London Orchestra (82775)

10.30 STEPTOE AND SON CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (r) (T) (211355)

11.15 GOGS Last in series (932046)

11.25 FINE CUT An insight into Robert Crumb, America's most famous underground artist (T) (15998201)

1.30am FILM: The Seventh Victim (1943) starring Kim Hunter and Tom Conway. A girl tries to save her sister, Jacqueline, from devil-worshippers. Directed by Mark Robson (6981447)

2.35 WEATHER (8617008)

CHOICE

The Willows in Winter
ITV, 2.45pm

The team responsible for last year's Christmas animation of *The Wind in the Willows* presents a sequel, in similar vein and with the same distinctive voices. Listen once more for Rik Mayall as Toad, Alan Bennett (Mole), Michael Palin (Rat) and Michael Gambon (Badger). The main difference is that the source is not Kenneth Grahame, who did not write a sequel, but William Horwood's 1993 story which attempted to capture the Grahame style. Purists who feel that somebody else's work can never be as good as the original may transfer their disapproval to this adaptation. Those less fussy will enjoy a non-stop stream of fun in which Mole goes missing, presumed dead, and gets a memorial service, while Toad, the great aviator, parachutes his way into a stately home.

Stanley Baxter in Reel Terms
Channel 4, 8.00pm

The Scottish entertainer, now 70, returns for a Christmas special which seamlessly mixes highlights from his past shows with new material. As the title suggests film parodies loom large, including a spoof disaster movie called *Towering Quake*, in which, as usual, he plays every part. But perhaps his best lampoon is of a British war film in which a plummy-voiced naval officer says farewell to his sweetheart. Among celebrity impressions are Noël Coward, Maurice Chevalier and the Queen. Baxter claims to be the first to play the Queen on television, a bold move at the time though much imitated since. But Baxter neither looks like her, nor captures her voice, and his sketch about a Christmas Day broadcast constantly interrupted by a fussy director is one of the weaker elements. Dawn French makes a guest appearance.

One Foot In the Grave: Starbound
BBC1, 9pm

Last year's Christmas offering from the Meldrews was one of the feebler seasonal efforts, though it still drew a huge audience. The show is in better form this time, if only because most of it takes place on home ground. The big mistake is to lift sitcom characters out of their familiar settings. There is still a foreign holiday to be got out of the way but this happens early on, allowing ample time to heap further domestic mishaps and indignities on the irascible Victor. And as if earthly calamities were not enough to send him into a frenzy, he gets a visit from the supernatural. As usual with David Renwick's scripts the jokes pile up haphazardly with little attention to structure but this has rarely sunk the show before. Rula Lenska joins the regulars as the new boss of Angus Deayton's Patrick.

Peter Benchley's The Beast
ITV, 9pm

In *Jaws* it was a shark, in this new Benchley tale it is a deadly giant squid. But the plot is more or less the same. We are in a small fishing community in the state of Washington. A young couple are enjoying a romantic trip on their yacht when their craft is holed and they go to a watery grave. After this hectic opening the pace slackens but it is not long before the monster has struck again, first biting its way through an anchor chain and then accounting for two young divers. A handsome fishing boat captain (William Peterson) and a glamorous coastguard (Karen Sillas) lead the counter-attack. Jeff Bleckner, who directs, is no Spielberg and *The Beast* is no *Jaws*. But as undemanding holiday fare, in which action triumphs over character, it slides down easily enough. The concluding part is at the same time tomorrow.

Peter Waymark

6.00am GMTV (7425881)

9.25 FILM: Cannonball Run II (1983) with Burt Reynolds, Shirley MacLaine, Dean Martin and Sammy Davis Jnr. A group of eccentric enthusiasts embark on a car race across America for a million-dollar prize. Featuring a cameo appearance by Frank Sinatra. Directed by Hal Needham (T) (17755341)

11.20 SURVIVAL SPECIAL Barbara Tyack's investigation into the remarkable habits of baboons (T) (4812171)

12.20pm CARTOON TIME (9963626)

12.35 NEWS (T) and weather (91354794)

12.50 FILM: Funny Farm (1988) Chevy Chase stars as a New York sports journalist who decides a move to the country will do him the world of good. Directed by George Roy Hill (T) (94520220)

Feature-length animated fun (2.45pm)

2.45 THE WILLOWS IN WINTER A feature-length sequel to last year's adaptation of *The Wind in the Willows* (T) (7869256)

4.10 HOME AND AWAY (T) (6435862)

4.40 NEWS (T) and weather (4969713)

4.50 FILM: The Secret Garden (1994) with Kate Maberly. Lavish adaptation of Frances Hodgson Burnett's classic tale (T) (84907591)

6.45 RUSS ABBOT CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (T) (614510)

7.30 MICHAEL BARRYMORE'S STRIKE IT RICH (T) (317)

8.00 THE BILL: HAT TRICK (T) (6355)

8.30 EMMERDALE Viv and Vic struggle to keep the peace (T) (5862)

9.00 PETER BENCHLEY'S THE BEAST First of a two-part mini-series about an underwater creature terrorising a seaside town. Concluded tomorrow (T) (7201)

10.30 NEWS (T) and weather (403959)

10.40 THE LEE EVANS SHOW The comedian is joined by Tony Bennett (411268)

11.40 FILM: Doorways (1993) with George Newbern, Anne Le Guernec and Kurtwood Smith. A woman from a parallel universe lands on Earth and is immediately forced to go on the run. Directed by Peter Werner (251539)

1.15am FILM: Curiosity Kills (1990) with Rae Dawn Chong and Courteney Cox. An LA artist stumbles across a murder plot following the apparent suicide of the occupant of a neighbouring apartment. Directed by Colin Bucksey (539114)

2.50 NOT FADE AWAY (6259973)

3.50 FILM: First Love Romantic melodrama with William Kat, Susan Dey and Beverly D'Angelo. Directed by Joan Darling (104379)

5.25 JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH (1213447)

5.55 NEWS (1211737)

As HTV West except:

4.49pm-4.50 LOCAL WEATHER (7825713)

10.39-10.40 LOCAL WEATHER (779404)

1.15am INSTANT REPLAY 1996 (2932756)

2.20 Film: THEY LIVE (997195)

4.00 SOUND BITES (87067242)

4.15 Film: THE PICKWICK PAPERS (3960447)

5.30 JAMES BOND JNR (1201350)

WESTCOUNTRY

As HTV West except: No Variations

MERIDIAN

As HTV West except: No Variations

ANGLIA

As HTV West except:

4.49pm-4.50 ANGLIA WEATHER (7825713)

10.39-10.40 ANGLIA WEATHER (779404)

S4C

Starts: 6.50am PRO STARS (8519171)

7.15 THE GREATEST TUNE ON EARTH (7022201)

7.40 THE BABYSITTERS CLUB (8507997)

8.15 LITTLE SHOP (7548775)

8.40 WHERE ON EARTH IS CARMEN SAN DIEGO? (9017572)

9.00 THE BIG BREAKFAST (23688)

10.00 BLESS THIS HOUSE (80292)

10.30 Film: THE BATTLE OF THE SEXES (23990152)

12.05pm THE PINK PANTHER (2935152)

12.20 SLOT MEITHRIN (3960862)

12.55 RACING FROM KEMPTON (94927978)

3.10 CITIZEN 2000 (7298046)

4.30 5 PUMP (27715)

6.00 NEWYDDION (987125)

6.05 HENO (121249)

6.35 SION A SIAN (370688)

7.00 MR BROC (6201)

8.00 PENBLWYDD HAPUS (4997)

8.30 NEWYDDION (233423)

8.45 Y PALMANT AUR (342268)

9.45 Film: MY LEFT FOOT (809084)

11.40 Film: OUTRAGEOUS FORTUNE (641978)

RTE

Starts: 8.00 Film: A WOMAN OF PARIS (1747201)

9.30 Film: AN AFFAIR TO REMEMBER (57757404)

11.35 1994 SIEGFRIED AND ROY SPECIAL (6787930)

12.30pm BENSON (5669220)

1.10 WILDVISION (65591882)

1.15 THE BIG RACE (99077591)

3.30 Film: HOMEWARD BOUND (2718959)

5.00 CHRISTMAS SHOWTIME WITH BOYZONE (6806862)

6.00 THE ANGELUS (6864065)

6.01 SIX-ONE (1498862)

6.15 TALKABOUT CHRISTMAS (1674930)

6.45 FAIR CITY (1673201)

7.15 Film: MY FRIEND JOE (78465133)

9.05 NEWS AND WEATHER (2828846)

9.25 35-A-SIDE (8456794)

9.55 Film: IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER (74864626)

12.20am Film: CASABLANCA (4364089)

2.10 A PRAYER AT BEDTIME (27305244)

6.50am PRO STARS (r) (8519171)

7.15 THE GREATEST TUNE ON EARTH (7022201)

7.40 THE BABYSITTERS CLUB (r) (8507997)

8.15 LITTLE SHOP (r) (7548775)

8.40 WHERE ON EARTH IS CARMEN SANDIEGO? (9017572)

9.00 THE BIG BREAKFAST (23688)

10.00 HANGIN' WITH MR COOPER (r) (T) (80292)

10.30 CRYSTAL MAZE (r) (T) (22978)

11.30 BACK TO THE FUTURE (r) (6503187)

11.55 THE PINK PANTHER (9734423)

12.25pm GOD IN THE HOUSE (3/6) (5843012)

12.55 RACING From Kempton Park Brough Scott introduces the **1.10**; **1.40** and **2.45** races (94927978)

3.10 FILM: Vanya on 42nd Street (1994) starring Wallace Shawn, Julianne Moore and Andre Gregory. Adaptation of Chekhov's *Uncle Vanya*. Directed by Louis Malle (T) (71964220)

5.25 NEWS (T) and weather (6613220)

5.30 ABEL'S ISLAND Animated adventure based on William Steig's novel about a mouse (r) (510)

6.00 HOLLYOAKS (T) (423)

6.30 PAVAROTTI RETURNS TO LLANGOLLEN The tenor returns to Wales forty years to the day since his last appearance there to perform in the Llangollen Welsh Festival, where he is joined by his father Fernando and the Modena Choir to perform a selection of classic songs including works by Puccini, Verdi and Handel (T) (84201)

7.58 NHS LOTO: THE RESULTS SHOW

Stanley Baxter in festive mood (8pm)

8.00 STANLEY BAXTER IN REEL TERMS A seasonal special with the veteran Scottish comedian and special guest Dawn French (T) (2249)

9.00 FILM: 1492 — The Conquest of Paradise (1992) starring Gérard Depardieu as Christopher Columbus. Also starring Armand Assante and Sigourney Weaver. Directed by Ridely Scott (52964442)

11.50 FILM: Divine Madness (1980) Bette Midler in concert (709591)

1.35am FILM: Fantastic Planet (1974) Animation set in the future when the human race has destroyed its civilisation. A blue super-race has evolved which keeps down the wild human population by regular culls. Directed by René Laloux (9226176)

2.50 FILM: Raggedy Rawney (1987) With Bob Hoskins, who also directs. Story of an army deserter who disguises himself as a fortune-telling madwoman in order to travel with the gypsies and carry on an affair (359911)

● **For more comprehensive listings of satellite and cable channels, see the Directory, published on Saturday**

SKY 1

7.00am Love Connection (4901591) **7.20** Press Your Luck (4921355) **7.40** Jeopardy! (3148775) **8.10** Hotel (5593572) **9.00** Another World (6969125) **9.45** The Oprah Winfrey Show (7843997) **10.40** Real TV (4766510) **11.10** Sally Jessy Raphael (9398510) **12.00** Geraldo (74152) **1.00pm** Jenny Jones (50572) **2.00** The Oprah Winfrey Show (38959) **3.00** World Wrestling Federation Christmas Mania (66591) **5.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (7625) **6.00** The Simpsons (1317) **6.30** The Simpsons (5997) **7.00** The Simpsons (8355) **7.30** Supermodels (4881) **8.00** Sightings (20355) **9.00** Nash Bridges (23442) **11.00** Star Trek: The Next Generation (87713) **12.00** LAPD (15060) **12.30am** Real TV (44422) **1.00** Hit Mix Long Play (28440)

SKY 2

7.00pm Star Trek: Deep Space Nine (1984510) **8.00** Police Rescue (1960930) **9.00** Inspector Maigret (1970317) **11.00** Late Show, with David Letterman (1308404) **12.00 FILM: The Southern Star** (2700350) **2.00am** Hit Mix Long Play (5056534)

SKY NEWS

Worldwide news coverage, with bulletins on the hour, 24 hours a day, seven days a week

SKY MOVIES

6.00am Spoils of War (1993) (25220) **8.00 The Sandlot** (1993) (52539) **10.00 The Hudsucker Proxy** (1994) (68133) **12.00 Heck's Way Home** (1995) (35862) **2.00pm Cool Runnings** (1993) (94930) **4.00 The Beverly Hillbillies** (1993) (2930) **6.00 Mighty Morphin Power Rangers** (1995) (14794) **8.00 Cool Runnings** (1993) (31473607) **9.40** US Top 10 (463423) **10.00 Pulp Fiction** (1994) (38784959) **12.35am Bullets Over Broadway** (1994) (711224) **2.15 Harry and Tonto** (1974) (726534) **4.10 The Hudsucker Proxy** (1994) (85723485)

THE MOVIE CHANNEL

6.00am Porco Rosso (1992) (25591) **7.30 The New Adventures of Little Toot** (1993) (35978) **8.30 Grizzly Adams and the Treasure of the Bear** (1985) (48510) **10.00 Sister Act II: Back in the Habit** (1993) (64775) **12.00 Night of the Twisters** (1996) (33404) **2.00pm With Honors** (1994) (92572) **4.00 Andre** (1994) (93499065) **5.40 Sister Act II: Back in the Habit** (1993) (81640065) **7.30** The Movie Show (7591) **8.00 Jack and Sarah** (1995) (17881) **10.00 Legends of the Fall** (1995) (78779978) **12.15am Goodbye Emmanuelle** (1977) (826466) **1.55 If Someone Had Known** (1995) (582814) **3.30 Enter the Ninja** (1981) (86718)

SKY MOVIES GOLD

4.00pm Haunted Honeymoon (1986) (45801171) **5.55 Wargames** (1983) (72094510) **7.50 The Karate Kid** (1984) (51846572) **10.00 The Magnificent Seven** (1960) (89136152) **12.10am Tootsie** (1982) (1546485) **2.10 It Started in Naples** (1960) (7524718) **3.50-5.10 Haunted Honeymoon** (1986) (76953756)

THE DISNEY CHANNEL

Sky Movies Gold takes over at 10pm. **6.00am** Muppet Babies (4657881) **6.25** Sing Me a Story, with Belle (4643688) **6.50** Big Garage (1725930) **7.00** Enchanted Tales: Jungle King (6931591) **7.45 FILM: Bluetoes, the Christmas Elf** (3943539) **8.10** Bonkers (9392688) **8.35** Goof Troop (8609688) **9.00** Aladdin (5236930) **9.25** Timon and Pumbaa (3060607) **10.10** Darkwing Duck (5914733) **10.35** Bonkers (7249201) **11.00** Quack Attack (8615355) **11.25** Deck the Halls (8915959) **11.50** Goof Troop (9079084) **12.15pm** Aladdin (3496355) **12.40** Enchanted Tales: Prince and the Pauper (2577355) **1.30 FILM: Freaky Friday** (25442) **3.00** Have Yourself a Goofy Little Christmas (7447220) **3.25** Bonkers (7466355) **3.50** Mouse Tracks (9516510) **4.15** Darkwing Duck (9199607) **4.40** Goof Troop (2963775) **5.05** Aladdin (7197133) **5.30** Timon and Pumbaa (9930) **6.00** Bone Chillers (9171) **6.30** Making of 101 Dalmations (1733) **7.00** Home Improvement (241997) **7.25** Home Improvement (220404) **7.50** Home Improvement (823775) **8.15** Home Improvement (933684) **8.40** Home Improvement (973539) **9.05** Home Improvement (951978) **9.30-10.00** Home Improvement (74201)

SKY SPORTS 1

7.00am Racing News (14881) **7.30** Live International Cricket (1223046) **3.30pm** Sports Centre Football Preview (98171) **5.00** Live Football Special (863794) **7.30** Live Scottish League (851959) **10.00** Sports Centre (76571) **10.30** Angling Masters (37084) **11.30** Asian Golf Show (29189) **12.30am** Football Special (55485) **2.30** Scottish League (90718) **4.30-5.00** Sports Centre (38621)

SKY SPORTS 2

8.00pm Angling Masters (6285133) **9.00** World Windsurfing Tour (2509510) **9.30** World of Sailing (4751355) **10.00** Trans World Sport (6208084) **11.00** Bobby Charlton's Football Scrapbook (8431539) **12.30am-1.00** Hall of Fame: Rugby Union (7967911)

SKY SPORTS 3

12.00 Beach Volleyball (43230317) **1.00pm** Football Special: The Best Goals and Football Bloopers of 1996 (12487572) **2.30** Canadian Pro Figure Skating (11230317) **5.00** World Wrestling Federation: Superstars (41786959) **6.00** Beach Volleyball (43229201) **7.00** World of Sailing (41787688) **7.30** International Cricket (38248688) **10.30** Beach Volleyball (68380607) **11.30-12.00** Sports Centre (84928201)

EUROSPORT

7.30am Equestrianism (73152) **8.30** All Sports (26152) **9.00** Ski-Jumping (95648) **10.00** All Sports (24268) **11.00** All Sports (23978) **11.30** Olympic Games (24607) **12.00** Football (44046) **1.00pm** Alpine Skiing (28020) **1.30** All Sports (57510) **2.00** All Sports (63084) **4.00** Truck Racing (39030) **5.00** Strongman (8510) **6.00** All Sports (2201) **6.30** Olympic Games (6881) **7.00** Extreme Games (35201) **8.00** All Sports (51249) **9.00** All Sports (36442) **9.30** Olympic Games (45775) **10.00** Football (34572) **11.00** Trial (25997) **12.00-12.30am** All Sports (53244)

GRANADA PLUS

6.00am The Krypton Factor (5444591) **6.30** Once Upon a Time (29011220) **6.45** Our Backyard (82528713) **7.00** Alphabet Zoo (7929688) **7.15** Once Upon a Time (8924268) **7.30** The Return of the Antelope (1902065) **8.00** Classic Coronation Street (1223336) **8.30** The Krypton Factor (1222607) **9.00** Families (1213959) **9.30** Albion Market (5733862) **10.00** Goostrey, a Village (6726978) **10.30** Leave It to Charlie (1235171) **11.00** Love for Lydia (1911713) **12.00** Classic Coronation Street (1226423) **12.30pm** Surgical Spirit (5744978) **1.00** The Practice (1982201) **1.30** Families (5743249) **2.00-5.00** Christmas on the Street (1327152) **5.00** Love for Lydia (1337539) **6.00** Classic Coronation Street (1102046) **6.30** Families (1126826) **7.00** Holding the Fort (1338268) **7.30** Surgical Spirit (1115510) **8.00** Sam (8145133) **9.00** Classic Coronation Street (2852688) **9.30** Christmas on the Street (5757442) **10.00-11.00** Shades of Darkness (8168084) **From 11.00pm-2.00am Men and Motors**

Horst Bucholtz and Yul Brynner (Sky Movies Gold, 10.00pm)

GRANADA GOOD LIFE

From 6.00am-9.00 TV High Street. Includes consumer news and features and Your Stars presented by Russell Grant **From 9.00-12.00 Food and Wine.** Includes recipes and ideas from Delia Smith **From 12.00-3.00pm Health and Beauty.** Includes Natural Health **From 3.00-6.00 Home and Garden.** Includes The Good Life Style Guide

THE HISTORY CHANNEL

4.00pm Biography: Jesus, His Life (2510626) **5.00** Jerusalem (1276355) **6.00** The Home Front (4749510) **7.00-8.00** Biography: Jesus, His Life (6209713)

THE SCI-FI CHANNEL

Films, features and classic series every day from **9pm-4am** Monday to Wednesday and **1am-4am** Thursday to Sunday on satellite, and from **8am-4am** every day on cable. **1.00am** The Twilight Zone (6216640) **1.30** Tales of the Unexpected (6897992) **2.00** New Alfred Hitchcock (3735718) **2.30** Rod Serling's Night Gallery (3747553) **3.00-4.00** Friday the 13th (2736602)

TLC/DISCOVERY

9.00am This Old House (4308442) **9.30** This Old House (2675881) **10.00** This Old House (9960249) **10.30** This Old House (4304626) **11.00** This Old House (1086317) **11.30** This Old House (1087046) **12.00** This Old House (4395978) **12.30pm** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (2686997) **1.00** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (1626775) **1.30** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (2685268) **2.00** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (7539220) **2.30** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (6889152) **3.00** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (7558355) **3.30-4.00** This Old House, with Steve and Norm (6891997) **DISCOVERY takes over at 4.00pm.** **4.00pm** Rex Hunt's Fishing Adventures (8870404) **4.30** Roadshow (8876688) **5.00** Time Travellers (7520572) **5.30** Terra X (8890268) **6.00** Wild Things: Untamed Africa (2681688) **7.00** Next Step (7540336) **7.30** Arthur C Clarke's World of Strange Powers (8877317) **8.00** Showcase: FDR (1073423) **12.00** Classic Wheels (6823468) **1.00am** The Extremists (5264911) **1.30-2.00** Special Forces (7631379)

UK GOLD

7.00am Jackanory (78775249) **8.20 FILM: Tennessee's Partner** (41932510) **9.55** Hi-di-Hi (3814607) **10.55** Terry and June (6830978) **11.30** Some Mothers Do 'Ave 'Em (82063268) **12.35pm** Shelley (34349775) **2.10 FILM: The Eagle Has Landed** (27296152) **4.40** All Creatures Great and Small (22557133) **6.30** Bread (6895508) **7.35** Hi-di-Hi (4555442) **8.45** Bob's Full House (1595065) **9.30** Casualty (8579607) **10.30 FILM: She-Devil** (91700591) **12.20am** The Best of Top of the Pops (9520337) **12.50 FILM: Blithe Spirit** (6959669) **2.25** Shopping at Night (15686843)

TCC

6.00am Tiny TCC (4646775) **6.20** Brum (4589997) **6.30** Jim Henson (58862) **7.00** Thumbelina (53978) **8.00** April and the Sandman (69881) **8.30** Tin Soldier (68152) **9.00** Art Attack (59404) **9.30** Nine to Five (96423) **10.00** Saved by the Bell (59628) **11.00** Valley High (72268) **11.30** Heng Time (73997) **12.00** Heartbreak High (86046) **1.00pm** Madison (89220) **1.30** Cybernet (99510) **2.00** Valley High (73171) **3.00** California Dreams (77713) **4.00-5.00** Saved by the Bell (56220)

NICKELODEON

6.00am Teenage Mutant Hero Turtles (27442) **6.30** Biker Mice from Mars (80336) **7.00** Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys (12423) **7.30** Tales from the Cryptkeeper (91930) **8.00** Mighty Max (30355) **8.30** Hey Arnold (39626) **9.00** Rugrats (95602) **10.00** Real Monsters (71688) **10.30** Doug (18862) **11.00** Rocko's Modern Life (29152) **11.30** Pete and Pete (20881) **12.00** The Secret World of Alex Mack (33442) **12.30pm** Ren and Stimpy (61713) **1.00** The Ferals (11794) **1.30** Space Cases (60084) **2.00** Clarissa Explains It All (8997) **2.30** Doug (4046) **3.00** Real Monsters (7404) **3.30** Stickin' Around (9591) **4.00** Bruno the Kid (8626) **4.30** Rugrats (7510) **5.00** Sister Sister (1084) **6.00** Moesha (5775) **6.30-7.00** Are You Afraid of the Dark? (9355)

PARAMOUNT

7.00pm Diff'rent Strokes (2713) **7.30** Benson (5539) **8.00** Due South (57423) **9.00** Almost Perfect (16688) **9.30** Taxi (58249) **10.00** Entertainment UK (34171) **10.30** Girls on Top (10591) **11.00** Manmade News (11133) **11.30** Nightstand (91201) **12.30am** Sledge Hammer! (42640) **1.00** Due South (38718) **2.00** Entertainment UK (66069) **2.30** Manmade News (78624) **3.00** Girls on Top (35534) **3.30-4.00** Almost Perfect (69176)

BRAVO

12.00 Fantasy Island (2652930) **1.00pm** Remington Steele (2678978) **2.00** Sapphire and Steel (9958404) **3.00** Fantasy Island (1085688) **4.00 FILM: Geronimo** (7556997) **6.00** Thunderbirds (2681442) **7.00** The Champions (1382572) **8.00** Starsky and Hutch (1391220) **9.00** Crime Story (1311084) **10.00-12.00 FILM: The House of Seven Corpses** (1084959)

UK LIVING

6.00am Kilroy (1908539) **7.00** The Agony Experience (1535084) **7.30** The Young and the Restless (3907862) **8.20** Food and Drink Christmas Quiz (1893688) **8.55** Turnabout (8198794) **9.35** Trivial Pursuit (8509238) **10.00** Entertainment Now! (6167249) **10.05** The Jerry Springer Show (1651171) **11.00** The Young and the Restless (1266862) **11.55** Brookside (22998897) **12.25pm** Call the Doctor (40784268) **12.50** Gabrielle (2388317) **1.40** Rolonda (9928930) **2.30** The Agony Experience (2809626) **3.00** Charlie's Angels (5841794) **4.00** Who's Sorry Now? (2890978) **4.30** Talkabout (2057997) **5.05** Lingo (45236404) **5.30** Lucky Ladders (2803442) **6.00** I Dream of Jeannie (2800355) **6.30** Ready, Steady, Cook (1432387) **7.05** Brookside (4726775) **7.35** Trivial Pursuit (4350220) **8.00** General Practise (3629978) **9.00 FILM: Home of Angels** (11288030) **10.40** Entertainment Now! (2698539) **11.00-12.00** The Sex Files II (1511404)

FAMILY CHANNEL

5.00pm Blockbusters (8775) **5.30** Treasure Hunt (39930) **6.30** Catchphrase (3997) **7.00** The Pyramid Game (8539) **7.30** Hart to Hart (83065) **8.30** My Two Dads (8794) **9.00** Bergerac (75846) **11.00** Bagdad Cafe (64249) **11.30** FM (78626) **12.00** Lou Grant (59614) **1.00am** Bergerac (74534) **2.00** Hart to Hart (79911) **3.00** Lou Grant (58756) **4.30-5.00** The Black Stallion (72089)

MTV

The 24 hour music channel. Includes news, reviews, live concert footage, interviews and the latest music video charts

VH-1

The video hits channel. Classic rock and pop videos and the best new sounds

ZEE TV

7.00am Jaagran (74072046) **7.30** Life Style East (90427713) **8.30** Pakistan Business Update (39851442) **9.00** Hit Thi Hit Hai (39842794) **9.30** Your Zindegi Special (77289607) **10.00** Bharat Ek Khoj (74080065) **11.00** Shakti (63895930) **11.30** Banegi Apni Baat (63803959) **12.00** Dastaan (39822930) **12.30pm** Nukkad (77283423) **1.00 FILM: Raj Kumar** (61518442) **4.00** ZEE Top 10 (63819510) **5.00** ZEE Zone (41483882) **5.30** Kya Scene Hai (34324249) **6.00** Yoodle Ae Oo (34314882) **6.30** ZEE and You (34338442) **7.00** Ten Bhi Chup Men Bhi Chup (51388238) **7.30** Cinemagic (34334626) **8.00** News and Euronews (45083846) **8.30** Andaz (60833143) **9.00** Jaal (63815794) **9.30** Hasretain (77270959) **10.00** Commander (39830959) **10.30** Chehre (39849607) **11.00** Zee Horror Show (63827539) **11.30-12.00** Aap Ki Farmaish

CARTOON NETWORK/TNT

Continuous cartoons from 5am to 9pm, then TNT films as below. **9.00pm The Spy, with My Face** (1966) (10555065) **10.30 The Karate Killers** (1967) (70393336) **12.10am The Spy in the Green Hat** (1966) (60328843) **1.50 One of Our Spies Is Missing** (1965) (48302534) **3.25-5.00 The Helicopter Spies** (1967) (20468240)

PERFORMANCE

7.00pm Dance of the Century 4 (3618862) **8.00** Aria (8236355) **8.30** On the Town (8938794) **10.00** Hans Christian Andersen Awards (5713355) **11.30** Aria (6353220) **12.00-1.00** Stephane Grappelli (6438534)

CARLTON SELECT

5.00pm FILM: The Little Match Girl **7.00** Birds of a Feather (41626336) **8.00** The Upper Hand Christmas Show (41701268) **8.30** Sharpe (54082688) **10.30** Lenny Go Home (68395539) **11.30-12.00** Haggard

هكذا في الاصل

DREAM TEAM 42
Football's financial first XI

BUSINESS

GAS BILLS 41
Ofgas raises pressure on suppliers

THURSDAY DECEMBER 26 1996

BUSINESS EDITOR LINDSAY COOK

Investors must act fast to qualify for society bonuses

By Caroline Merrell and Anne Ashworth

TENS of thousands of building society account holders are in danger of losing bonuses averaging £1,000 if they do not act soon. Those who have allowed their accounts to fall below the all-important £100 qualifying level and do not top up their accounts by December 31 will lose out.

Some £16 billion is to be distributed by the societies becoming banks and being taken over by banks in the wave of demutualisation sweeping through the industry. But only borrowers and investors who meet certain criteria can receive payouts. A balance of £100 gives the right to vote in the poll changing the society's status.

As many as 100,000 Alliance & Leicester investors have already lost their bonuses. The society twice attempted to contact savers with small accounts to inform them that they were entitled to 250 free shares, provided that they topped up their accounts by October 14. They missed the deadline.

The other societies poised to float, or be taken over next year — Halifax, Woolwich, Bristol & West and Northern Rock — have yet to estimate how many of their investors will be left empty-handed, either through forgetfulness or ignorance. But if even 0.5 per cent of the 13.2 million saving members at the four societies fail to replenish their accounts by New Year's Eve, then some 66,000 people will kiss goodbye to average payouts of £1,000, a loss of some £66 million.

The Bristol & West reports that its investors have already been busy ensuring their windfalls. In the past few weeks, some 17,000 have increased their balances to £100 following reminder letters sent in November.

For those forced into making a late dash to replenish their accounts, the societies will be open as normal between Christmas and new year. Cheques paid into accounts will not need to be cleared to count towards qualifying for a payout, but the societies have given warning that any cheques which subsequently bounce will exclude people from the bonanza.

In order to qualify for the shares, borrowing and saving members of these societies must have also had £100 in their accounts on certain other dates. For instance, the nine million members of the Halifax were first told of the proposals for the flotation of their society on November 25, 1994. In order to qualify for the basic distribution of shares members must have had £100 in their accounts on this date as well as having £100 in their accounts at the end of this year.

The Halifax is also offering a variable share distribution based on the amount they have in the account. These extra shares will be based on the lower of two balances between November 25, 1994 and the date of the special general meeting, which is expected to be in February.

Further Rec bid likely to follow Northern defeat

By Christine Buckley and Eric Reguly

NORTHERN ELECTRIC has lost its independence by a narrow margin and at least one more takeover in the electricity sector is thought to be in the pipeline.

The seizure of Northern by CE Electric of America leaves just two independent regional electricity companies — Southern and Yorkshire — without bids. Southern has a market value of about £2 billion and a takeover battle could raise the price to £2.5 billion or more. Yorkshire's market value is about £1.3 billion.

The identity of the potential bidder for Southern or Yorkshire is not known, though American utilities are thought to be on the prowl.

The takeover of Northern leaves more than a quarter of the industry in American hands. Seeboard, Midlands Electricity and London Electricity are controlled by US groups, and East Midlands Electricity recently received a bid from Dominion Resources of Virginia.

Northern faces a boardroom shake-up after CE seized control by a narrow margin. The US group mounted a £782 million bid in one of the fiercest and most controversial battles in recent takeover history. It took hold of the company on Christmas Eve with acceptances of 50.3 per cent.

The bid hung in the balance until the last minite because of the intervention of the Prudential, Northern's biggest shareholder. It made a last-ditch attempt to secure support for the utility's rejection of the 650p a share offer with a purchase of more than 900,000 shares in the market at 650p — CE Electric's offer price. The shares, which amount to 0.9 per cent of the company, were sold by investors who had previously accepted CE Electric's offer.

The Northern boardroom casualties are likely to include David Morris, chairman, and Tony Hadfield, chief executive. Northern's directors could net up to £2.5 million in share-option profits and compensation packages if they are replaced. Northern said after it had lost control that it thought it had won the argument about value for the company, but it had been up to the market to decide.

The crucial twist came when the Takeover Panel extended the bid period after controversy over a discretionary payment of £250,000 made to BZW, Northern's financial advisers. The panel made the unusual move to extend the deadline because the discretionary fee had not been disclosed when the panel allowed BZW and Schroders, the merchant bank and advisers to Northern, to buy the utility's shares in the market.

The purchase of more than 2 per cent of the shares was crucial to Northern's defence. The payment, which came on top of a £1.5 million flat fee for BZW, was frozen by the panel.

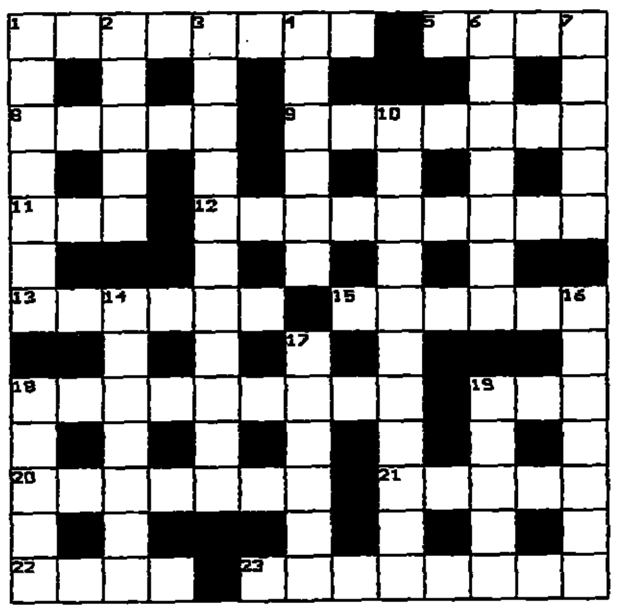
Northern had scraped past the post to retain its independence by 1pm last Friday — the original bid deadline — when CE Electric had gained acceptances for only 49.77 per cent of the shares.

On the last morning of the bid it repeated its offer to CE Electric of talks at a "sensible price". A spokesman said: "We didn't want to give the impression that we just wanted to stay in our turret in Newcastle."

By the weekend, CE Electric said that late acceptances had pushed it to victory with 50.13 per cent.

TIMES TWO CROSSWORD

No 974 in association with BRITISH MIDLAND



ACROSS
1 Misuse (3-5)
5 Look for (4)
8 Asian plant, its leaves, nuts chewed (5)
9 Competitor in running, throwing (7)
11 Carton: fight (3)
12 Occurring eight-yearly (9)
13 Dedicate (6)
15 Sweet (tones) (6)
18 Heavy and drooping (9)
19 Rowers' helmsman (3)
20 Able to be read (7)
21 Time-waster (5)
22 Anorak-wearing bore (4)
23 Octopus arm (8)

DOWN
1 Drank (7)
2 Tree-fluid for rubber (5)
3 Empirical guide (4,2,5)
4 Is in expectation of (6)
6 Poetically mournful (7)
7 The curfew tolled it of parting day (*Gray*) (5)
10 Announcement of decorations (7,4)
14 Sour condiment (7)
16 Not subject to levy (3-4)
17 Spinach-eating sailor (6)
18 Electricity cable support (5)
19 Severe stomach cramp (5)

British Midland
The Airline for Europe

PRIZES: THE WINNER will receive a return ticket travelling Economy Class to anywhere on British Midland's domestic or international network.

THE RUNNER-UP will receive a return ticket to anywhere on British Midland's domestic network. British Midland offers an extensive range of destinations throughout the UK as well as Europe. With over 1,400 flights a week to 15 European destinations British Midland are the Airline for Europe.

All flights are subject to availability.

Post your entry to Times Two Crossword, PO Box 6886, London E2 8SP to arrive by next Monday. The winners' names and solution will appear on Wednesday.

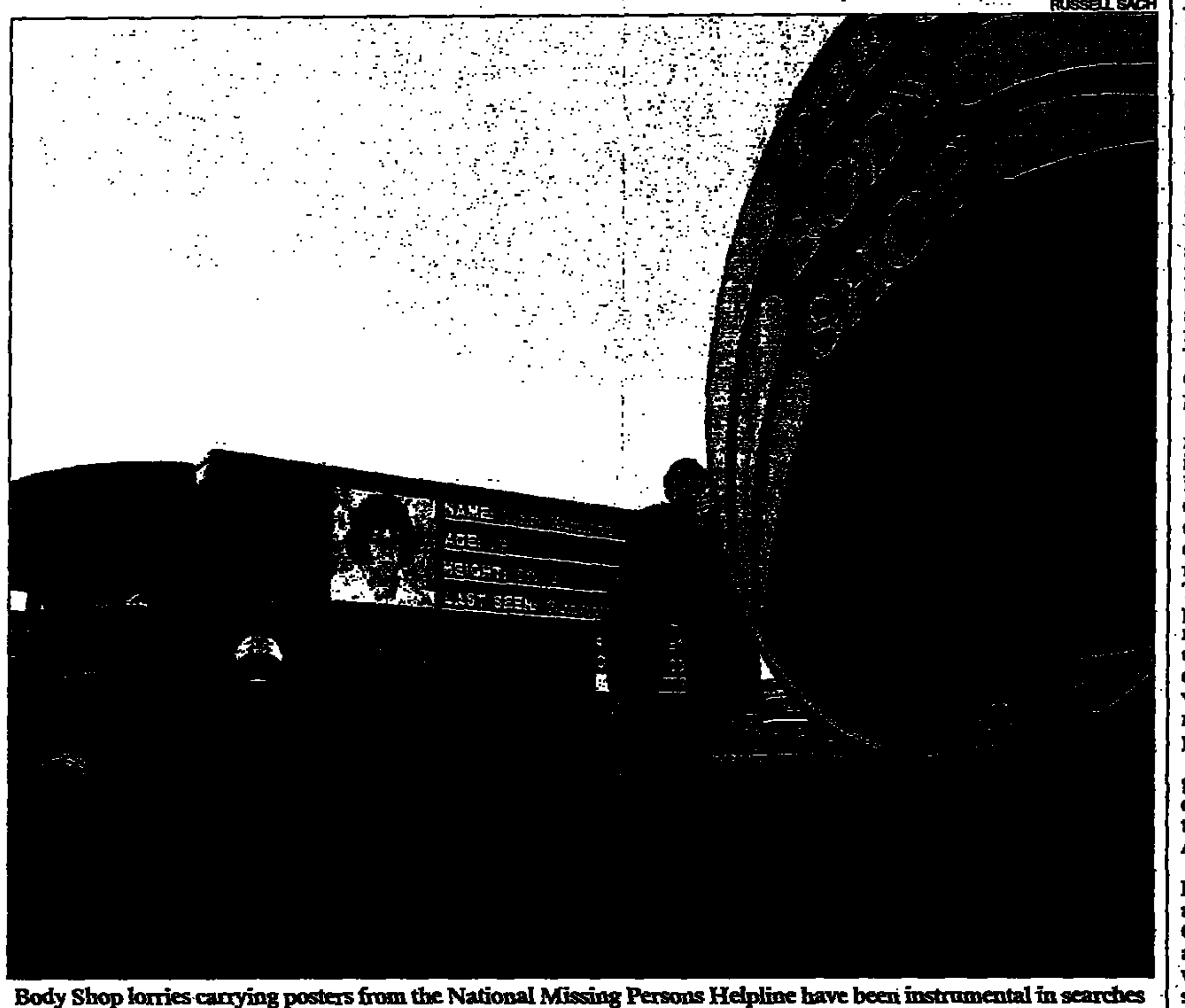
Name/Address ....

SOLUTION TO NO 973

ACROSS: 1 Earl 3 Codicil 8 Centaur 9 Later 10 Refit 11 Spatula 13 No comment 17 Laertes 19 Heron 20 Avast 22 Romance 23 Hellene 24 Welt

DOWN: 1 Encore 2 Ring-fence 3 Christmas tree 4 Delta 5 Cat 6 Lariat 7 Tactic 12 Utterance 14 Exhume 15 Bleach 16 Intent 18 Tithe 21 Ail

RUSSELL SACH



Body Shop lorries carrying posters from the National Missing Persons Helpline have been instrumental in searches

KPN to sell British and Dutch cable businesses

By Eric Reguly

KPN, the Dutch telecommunications and postal group, is to trigger the next round of consolidation in the cable industry by putting its British cable interests on the auction block.

KPN has hired CS First Boston, the investment bank, to sell the bulk of its cable businesses in Britain and The Netherlands. TeleWest Communications, the largest player in the sector, said that it is a potential suitor.

The sale marks a strategic reversal. Only a year ago, KPN armed itself with British bankers and financial advisers and went on the prowl for British cable assets.

It bought half of Telecential Communications, the ninth largest cable operator, for about £40 million, and IVS Cable Holdings, the cable arm of Flextech, the American-owned television programmer, for more than £50 million. The various acquisitions gave it access to some 750,000 homes in its franchise areas. At the time, Cees Griffioen KPN's chief financial officer, said: "We would like to be a player that is a factor in the market."

In The Netherlands, KPN has 77 per cent of Casema, one of the country's largest cable companies. The cable sale is the result of a Brussels directive ordering KPN to separate its fixed-line phone services from its cable investments in order to stimulate competition.

TeleWest, controlled by US West and Tele-Communications, the US companies, is the most logical buyer. International CableTel, the third largest player, is another potential suitor. Gary Ames, chief executive of US West's international arm, based in London, said: "We will have to look closely at KPN and the other independent cable companies."

☐ General Cable has raised £77 million through the sale and leaseback of certain fixed assets of Yorkshire Cable.

Two-horse race, page 41

Body Shop's people appeal

THOUSANDS of people whose loved ones have gone missing will be hoping that this year they will be as lucky as the woman whose young son returned to his home in Liverpool last Christmas after seeing his picture on the side of a Body Shop lorry (Sarah Cunningham writes).

During the past two years, the Body Shop has put 25 pictures of missing people, mainly youngsters, on the sides of its lorries. As a result eight cases have been resolved.

All win in latest soccer listing

By Jason Nissé

SUNDERLAND guaranteed a Merry Christmas for the burgeoning quoted football club sector when its shares soared to a 25 per cent premium to their flotation price in just a few hours of trading, giving the Wearside club a market value of £60 million.

This is more than four times the income predicted for Sunderland this season and comes against a background of market fears that the club could be relegated from the Premiership after its 5-0 drubbing by Manchester United.

Market-makers snapped up any Sunderland shares in the four hours of Christmas Eve trading, expecting a flurry of serious orders when the market reopens tomorrow. The shares closed at 732½p, compared with a flotation price of 585p.

The trading gave a £23.6 million valuation of the stake in Sunderland held by Bob Murray, its chairman. However, the widest smile will be on the face of Sir John Hall, chairman of Sunderland's neighbours Newcastle United. The Tyneside club plans to publish the details of its stock market flotation in the middle of January, and it is now expected that the flotation value will be nearer £200 million than the £150 million previously expected.

Should the Newcastle float go well, the City expects some of the Premiership's big clubs to float, including Everton, Aston Villa and Arsenal.

Speculation about Arsenal has pushed its shares, which are traded on the unregulated Ofex market, up by more than a third in the past three weeks. In January these shares stood at just £800. On Tuesday they were priced at £4,050, valuing the club at £227 million.

Southampton will be the next club to come to market, after the £10 million reverse takeover of Secure Retirement. It has rejected offers from Sir David Frost, the TV presenter, and Gavyn Davies, the Labour-leaning economist, to become investors.

Nomura International, the securities firm, has started a Footie Index, which priced a basket of shares, including Manchester United, Chelsea Village and West Ham United, at 100 on December 11. It closed on Tuesday at 119.3.

Football finance XI, page 42

Trade deficit improves despite strong pound

By Alasdair Murray

THE trade deficit with the rest of world declined by more than expected in October, suggesting that export performance remains strong despite the soaring pound.

The total deficit fell to £454 million, compared with £1.05 billion in September, according to the Office for National Statistics. But the deficit with non-EU countries in November rose to £639 million from £418 million in October.

The value of exports increased from £14 billion to £14.6 billion, boosted by a 4.5 per cent rise in export volumes to Europe in October. But November exports to non-EU countries showed volume growth of just 1.3 per cent (2 per cent in October).

Economists expect that in the medium term the rising pound will hit British export competitiveness and the deficit will begin to widen again.

Rank buys Canadian Hard Rock interests

By Alasdair Murray

THE Rank Group completed the reunificiation of its Hard Rock Café empire this week when it paid $61 million for the chain's Canadian operations and licensing rights.

The Canadian branch of the famous rock themed restaurant chain includes three owned cafés and eight franchises. The operations had been owned by the Bitove family, who control substantial catering interests.

Rank said that it would renovate and convert the sites to conform to the look and feel of the original Hard Rock Café opened in London in 1971. Rank now owns 75 Hard Rock Cafés, having paid $410 million this year for the US operations formerly owned by Peter Morton, one of the chain's founders. The company also bought back the rights to delevop the chain in South Africa.

Concern grows over SFA failings

By Jon Ashworth

THE Securities and Futures Authority (SFA), the frontline City regulator, has admitted to serious weaknesses in fighting abuse in the financial markets. Nearly all its big cases have been uncovered by firms internally, or are the results of complaints from investors.

Surprisingly few cases in which members are fined or punished are uncovered by the SFA's own surveillance. The SFA concedes that a "significant element" of cases are detected by firms internally, but points out that members face punitive action if they attempt to conceal the details.

Failings were highlighted in the recent Treasury Select Committee report on the collapse of Barings. The committee noted "with concern" that the SFA had failed to detect a lack of internal controls and management weaknesses during an inspection visit in January 1995, shortly before Barings collapsed.

Growing frustration among City firms threatens a knock-on effect. Members frequently alert the SFA to problems only to find themselves "rewarded" with substantial fines and public censure.

Morgan Stanley, the US investment house, was fined £240,000 plus costs in May 1995 after five private clients lost £20 million. The firm notified the SFA. In another case, Salomon Brothers was ordered to submit monthly reports despite correcting internal accounting problems that gave rise to a $194 million book-keeping loss.

Computer problems at Fidelity Brokerage were picked up after complaints by investors. Subsequent SFA action threatened to damage sales at Fidelity Investments, a separate strand of the fund management group. The SFA was at pains to stress that Fidelity Investments was not involved.

The SFA concedes weaknesses, but says the existing system is fair. A spokesman said: "If there has been a serious lack of control in a firm, it is right and proper that the firm's failings should be recognised." Fines worth more than £1 million have been imposed by the SFA in the past 12 months. It operates at a cost of £23 million a year, funded largely through a levy on members.

Many firms privately voice their anger at what is seen as a heavy-handed approach. One broker said: "We took all our problems to the SFA and said 'We brought it to you, give us the recognition'. They did the complete opposite."

He added: "Their job is to look after us, and hammer us if we do wrong. But you begin to wonder what agenda they're serving. Are they being gratuitously tough just to bolster their own reputation?"

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